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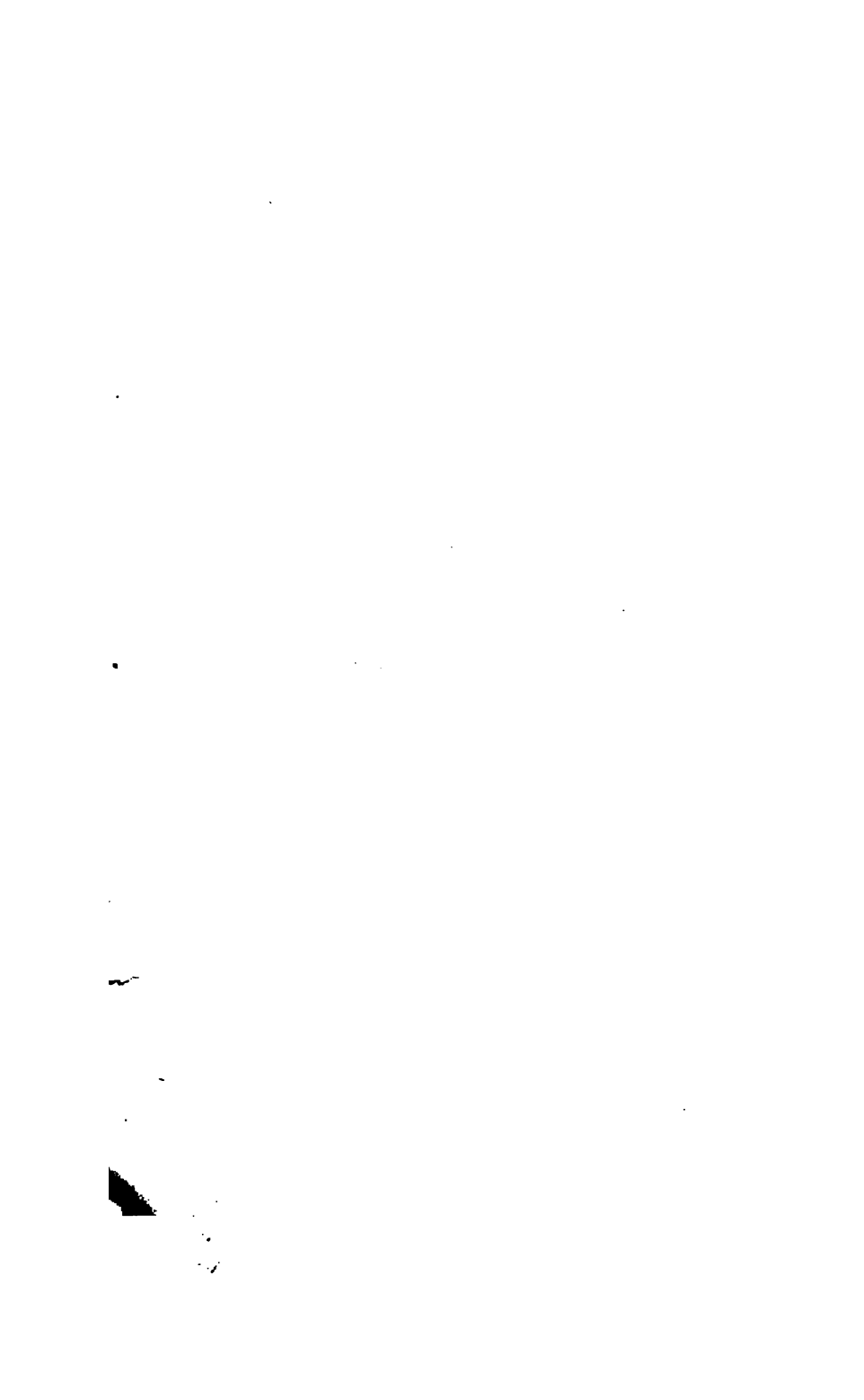
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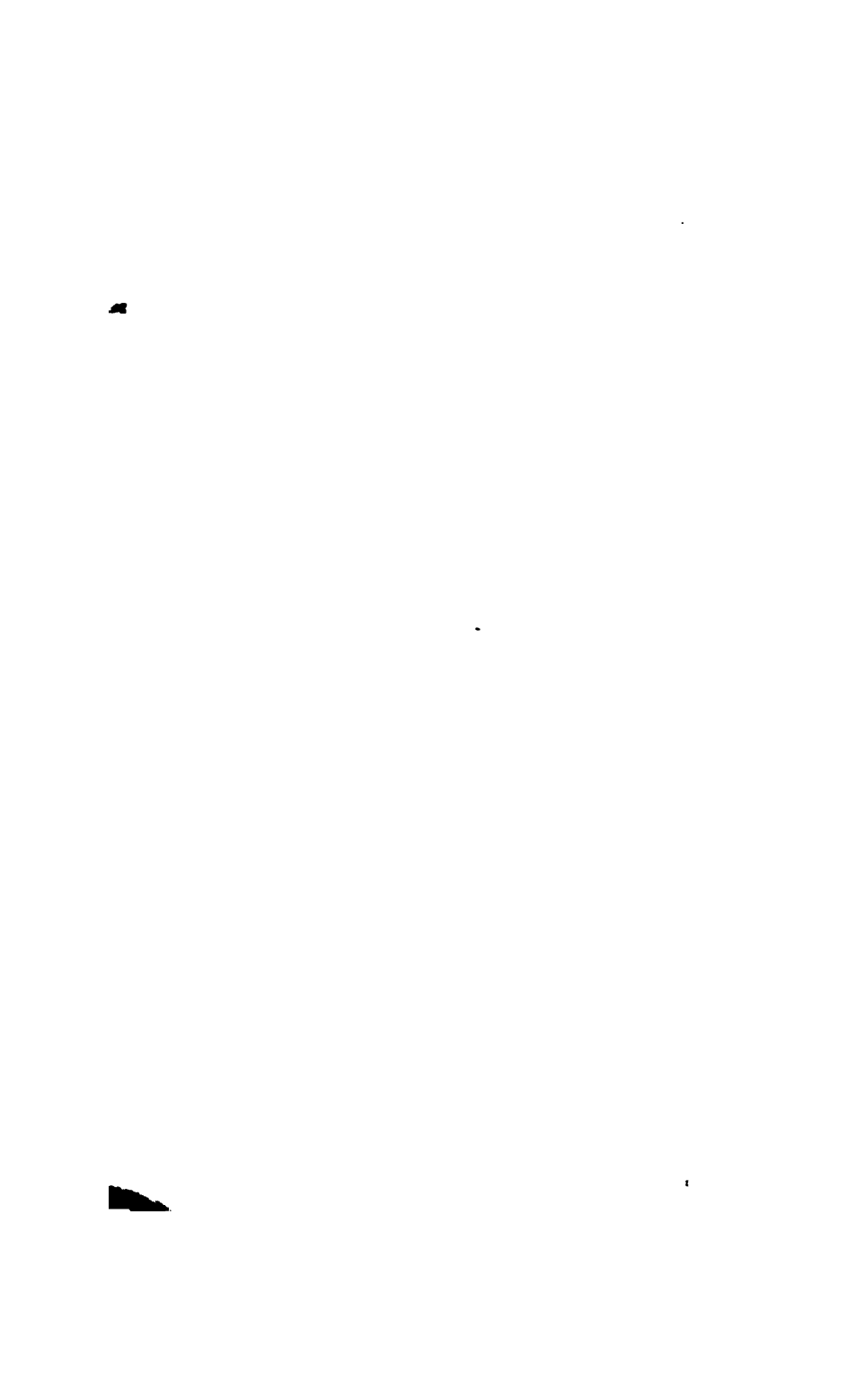




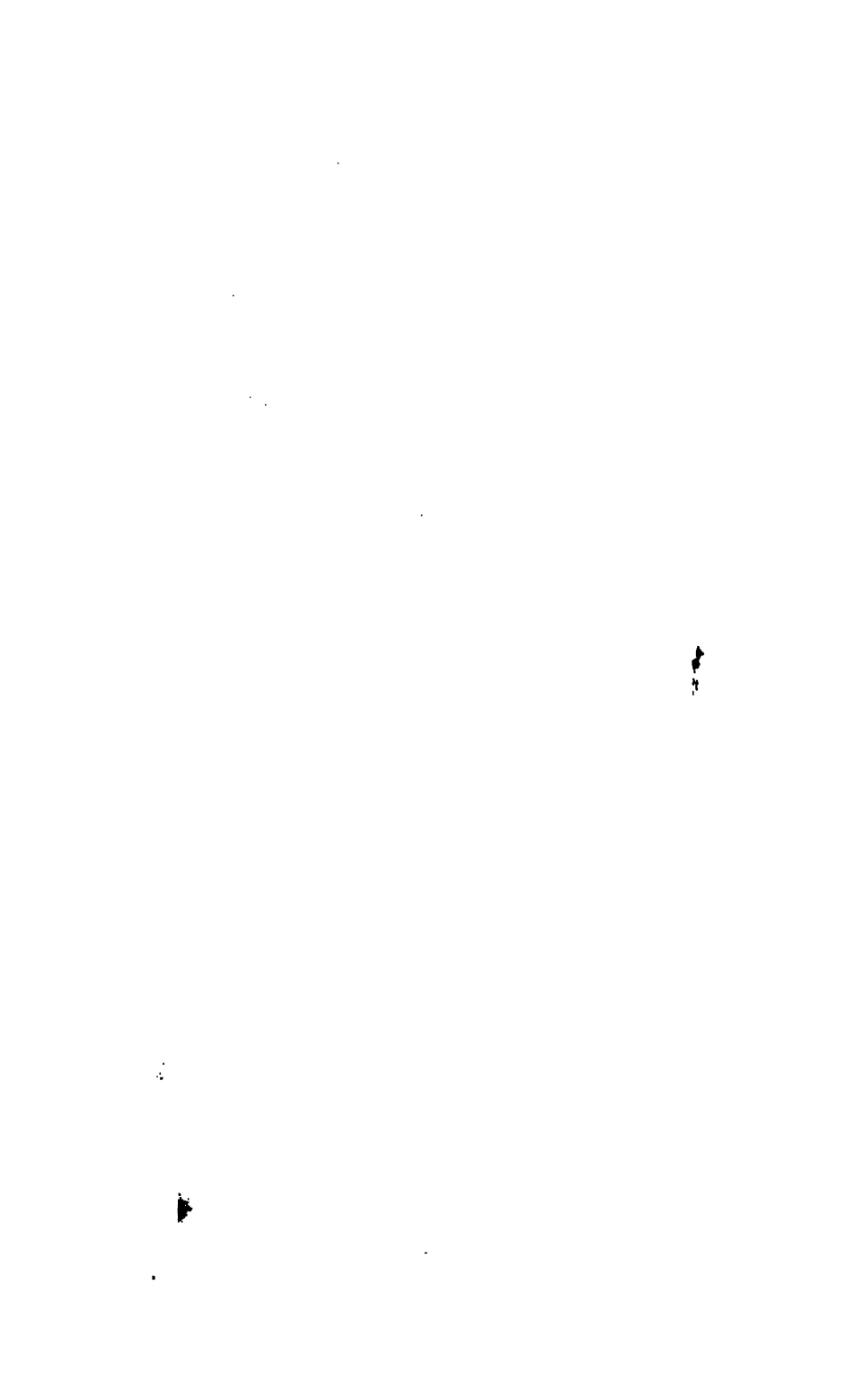
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**LETTERS FROM THE SOUTH.**



# Letters from the South,

WRITTEN DURING

AN EXCURSION IN THE SUMMER OF

1816.



BY THE AUTHOR OF

JOHN BULL AND BROTHER JONATHAN, &c. &c.

by J. K. Paulding.

*Ridentem dicere verum quid vetat? Horace.*



IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY JAMES EASTBURN & CO.

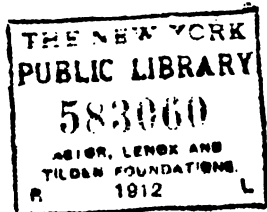
AT THE LITERARY ROOMS, BROADWAY, CORNER OF  
PINE-STREET.

Abraham Paul, printer.

.....

1817.

56.



*Southern District of New-York, ss.*

**B**E IT REMEMBERED, that on the fifteenth day of October, in the forty-second year of the Independence of the United States of America, *James Eastburn & Co.* of the said district, hath deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof they claim as Proprietors, in the words following, to-wit:

"Letters from the South; written during an excursion in the summer of 1816. By the Author of *John Bull* and Brother Jonathan, &c. &c.

*Ridentem dicere verum, quid vetat?* HORACE."

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled "an Act for the encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned." And also to an Act, entitled "an Act supplementary to an Act, entitled an Act for the encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints.

CHARLES FINN,  
*Clerk of the Southern District of New-York.*

## LETTER I.

*DEAR FRANK,*

IN order to lay a solid foundation for my travels, I ought first to tell how this new world was made; and, secondly, how it was peopled; since, if it had never been made or peopled, it would not be worth writing about. There are two ways of making a world, lately invented by the geologists—one by fire, the other by water. I mention these to show you it is no difficult matter; and you may take your choice of either, as people choose whether they will have their mutton roasted or boiled.

But, though it was easy enough for the philosophers to tell how America was made, the peopling of it was not quite so trifling a job, and cost them more labour, than all the rest of the earth put together. The old world, it seems, was hugely sur-

prised, at finding this thumping bantling, as it were, thus laid at its door; and the philosophers, like faithful parish officers, set to work to ferret out the father. In this pilgrimage, they fared pretty much like the lad in the French Novel, who, in a similar pious research, discovered no less than thirty-six fathers, one after the other.

The honest aboriginals of America, not being philosophers, did not much care to what country their ancestors appertained; but the learned were good enough to oblige them, by enlightening their comprehension in this particular. For this purpose each one set out on a different track, and, what is very remarkable, each found what he was looking for, in his own opinion; although, to say the truth, some of them, assuredly, were not governed by a family likeness. One found out they were descended from Joktan, the son of Eber, son to—the Lord knows who; a second, from the Spaniards, who fled on the first invasion of Spain by the Moors; a third, from the Atlantides; a fourth, from the Scandinavians; a fifth, from the Hunns; a sixth, from the Canaanites; a seventh, from the Japanese; an eighth, from the Romans; a ninth, from the Gauls; a tenth, from the

Friezlanders; an eleventh, from the Celts; a twelfth, from the Egyptians; a thirteenth, from the Phœnicians; a fifteenth—I beg pardon—a fourteenth, from the Chinese; a fifteenth, from the Norwegians; a sixteenth, from the Ethiopians; and a seventeenth, from the Anthropophagi! Here is an ancestor for every state in the union, which is enough, in all conscience, to content a reasonable man. But there are at least twenty more papas putting in for little America, which shows how anxious every body was to claim this noble offspring. Each of these supported his theory with a pertinacity proportioned to its enormity; and, perhaps, there never was such a mass of absurdity as has been generated by this subject, useless in itself, and now beyond the reach of human research to determine.

It was to be hoped that the subject had been laid at rest in the learned lumber of the times, never to be revived. But a philosopher of our own country, whose name may be found in all the newspapers, has lately revived it; and did, what was thought utterly impossible—produced new absurdities. The flat-nosed Tartars, and Samoiedes, and all the nonsense of old Thomas Brerewood,

are again conjured up, to play at foot-ball with, and tickle our learned societies. Since, however, the subject has been thus raised from the dead, I see no reason why I may not advance my theory, which, I have little doubt, will overturn and utterly demolish all others, if it ever fairly comes before the world. I have actually discovered, by the infallible aid of analogy, that America is the oldest quarter of the world, and the true hive from whence the earth was peopled after the deluge.—“First recover that—and then thou shalt hear further.”

America is the largest quarter of the globe, and must therefore be the eldest born ; for, taking the analogy of all nature, the largest must be the oldest, because it has had the largest time to grow ; and this analogy is peculiarly applicable to the earth, which, according to the geologists, is growing lustily every day. Another proof of the superior antiquity of America is, that, at the time of the first discovery, she had forgot her own name ; in consequence of which the monarchs of Europe kindly christened her over again—with blood. Nothing can be a greater proof of old age, than the loss of memory ; and to forget one's name, is an infallible

indication of extreme longevity. One of the weak arguments brought forward by the ignorant philosophers of Europe, against the antiquity of the new world, as they choose to call it, merely because it was new to them, is, that the aborigines of America are far below the natives of Asia and Europe in learning, science, and all those arts which conduce to the delights of existence. Now this, so far from establishing their theory, is, in my mind, almost a conclusive argument in favour of mine. Do not all nations relapse into a sort of second childhood, and, in the course of ages, forget what, in the course of ages, they had learned? What has become of the glories of Egypt, and Greece, and Italy—the most renowned nations of the ancient world? Egypt and Greece have relapsed into barbarity, and Italy is become a nation of—fiddlers. Their glory exists only in the remembrance of what they once were; in their arts, their warlike renown, and their ancient literature—as the science of our aborigines does in the remains of those astonishing works, whose creation is far beyond either tradition or history, and which, as they meet the eye of the stranger, as he glides down the gentle Ohio, fill him with

a vague and indefinite wonder. A people may be so old as to have forgotten every thing but the arts necessary to existence; and this is, doubtless, the case with our aborigines. Besides, there is a wonderful difference between a people who tell their own achievements, and those who are ignorant of the noble art of writing. The former, always make the man striding over the lion, while the latter, having nobody to take care of their posthumous fame, leave, generally, but an indifferent reputation behind them. I will venture to say, that the early inhabitants of this new world performed as many impossible achievements as the Greeks, Romans, and English! only there were, unluckily, no Herodotuses, Livys, and Venerable Bedes, to record them.

Having given such special reasons, for believing that Noah was an American, it would seem unnecessary to offer any proof, that the people of Europe, at least, are descended from the aborigines of this quarter of the world. With regard to those of Africa, there is much *colour* for the belief, that they must look for their parentage somewhere else; and, whenever they find it, much good may it do them. It may be worth while, however, to

notice a few characteristic resemblances between the Indians of America and the polished nations of Europe, that, beyond doubt, prove the paternity of the former.

The Indians are much given to high play; so are the fashionable people abroad. The Indians neglect their wives; so do the fashionable people abroad. The Indians are mightily given to long, pompous harangues; so are the fashionable orators abroad. The Indians are great smokers; so are the Dutch and Germans. The Indians are fond of high sounding titles, such as Iron Cloud, Negro Legs, Jumping Sturgeon, Big-eared Dog, Shifting Shadow, &c.; so are the fashionable people abroad. The Indians are great beggars; so are the Italians. They are deep drinkers, like the Germans and English; they are smoky and dirty, like the Russians; great dancers, like the French; proud and lazy, as the Spaniards; and as vain as all these put together. Certainly all this shows a common origin; and the logical conclusion to be drawn, is, that a people, like the Indians, uniting in themselves the various and distinguishing characteristics of the principal nations of the earth, *must* be the great common ancestor of

all. Another proof of this is, the propensity which the natives of those countries have for flocking to this, which, doubtless, arises from a sort of instinctive affection for the land of their forefathers. No other reason, that I know of, can philosophically account for the obstinacy with which they persist in quitting their native lands, where they live under such ancient, worn-out, and respectable governments; where they have no property, and, consequently, no cares, but to escape starvation; and where machinery is brought to such astonishing perfection, that there is hardly any use for human labour, and poor men have nothing to do, but be idle and starve, or busy themselves in politics, and be hanged.—Farewell.

## LETTER II.



*DEAR FRANK,*

**INASMUCH** as I only mean to give you a few occasional sketches of 'Ould Virginia,' as Captain Smith calls it, I shall content myself with merely reminding you that its first effectual settlement commenced somewhat more than two centuries ago, and a few years anterior to that of Plymouth, in Massachusetts, the oldest settlement, I think, in that quarter. Farther back than this I will not go; for, to use the words of the first historian of Virginia, so called after 'the most famous, renowned, and worthie of all memorie, queen Elizabeth'—'For the stories of Arthur, Malgo, and Brandon, that say a thousand years agoe they were in the north of America; or the Fryer of Linn, that by his black art went to the north pole, in the yeare 1360; in that I know them not. Let this suffice.'

The history from whence this extract is taken is highly curious, and contains a variety of minute particulars of the dangers and hardships encountered by the early adventurers. Among these the most sagacious, brave, and enterprising, by far, was the famous Captain John Smith, who, on all occasions of emergency, acted as a sort of dictator among them. It was he that negotiated or fought with the Indians; explored the neighbouring waters, and visited the Indian tribes on the Chesapeake and its tributary streams. He visited the 'Weanocks, Anontahocks, Appamattocks, Manahocks, Massawomocks, Kusharawocks, Sasquashannocks, Acquintanackocks, Quiyoughcohanocks;' and all the names that end in *nocks*: at the end of which pilgrimage he breaks forth into the following poetic stanzas:

' Thus have I walkt a wayless way, with *uncouth* pace,  
Which yet no Christian man did ever trace,  
But yet I know this not affects the minde,  
Which eares doth heare, as that which eyes doe finde.'

The first explorers of James River, called Powhatan, after the great emperor, were, it appears, subjected to a variety of inevitable hardships; sometimes were ill governed, and not unfrequently

rather difficult to govern. A writer makes the following complaints against a certain president of the colony :

‘ Had we,’ says he, ‘ been as free from all sinnes as gluttony and drunkennesse, we might have been canonized for saintes ; but our president would never have been admitted, for ingrossing to his private oat-meale, sacke, oyle, *aqua vitæ*, beefe, egges, or what not, but the kettell : that indeed he allowed equally to be distributed, and that was halfe a pint of wheat, and as much barley, boiled with water, for a man, a day ; and this being fryed some 26 weeks in the ship’s hold, contained as many wormes as graines ; so that we might trulie call it rather so much brane as corne. Our drink was water ; our lodgings castles in the ayre.’

This notable president was deposed, and another chosen, ‘ who,’ says the historian, ‘ being little beloved, and of weake judgment in dangers, and lesse industrie in peace, committed the managing of all things abroad to captaine Smith, who, by his owne example, good wordes, and faire promises, set some to mow, others to bind the thatch, some to build houses, others to thatch them, *himselfe bearinge the greatest taske for his owne share, so that, in a short time, he provided most of them with lodgings, neglectinge any for himselfe.*”

How admirably this simple picture sets forth the fine character of Smith; himself the first example of industry, in procuring shelter, and the last to take advantage of it. Only give such men a sphere of action, and they will lead all mankind by the nose, whenever danger comes.

In this way Jamestown was built, on what was then the territory of the great emperor Powhatan, a name inseparably connected with the early history of Virginia. Powhatan appears to have been a 'salvage,' as the phrase then was, of liberal and magnanimous principles, although he became at last an irreconcilable enemy to the white people. It appears that the 'salvages,' all along the coast of North America, with very few exceptions, treated the whites with hospitality, while they continued to think them mere visitors. But whenever it was discovered that they came with views of permanent settlement, a sort of vague perception of what would be the final result to themselves and their posterity, generally converted this friendly disposition into deep, lasting, and irreconcilable hostility. Powhatan was so called from the place of his residence; but his real name was *Wahun-*

*sonack.* The person and state of 'Powhatan the great emperor' is thus described.

'He is of personage a tall, well-proportioned man, with a soure look, his head somewhat gray, his beard so thinne that it seemeth none at all; his age near sixtie, of a very able and hardy body to endure anye labour. About his person ordinarily attended 40 or 50 of the tallest men his countrie doth afforde. Every nighte upon the foure quarters of his house are foure sentinells, each from the other a flight shoot, and at everye half houre one from the *corps du guard* doth hollow, shaking his lips with his finger between them, untoe whom every sentinell doth answer round from his stand. If any doth faile, they presentlie send forth an officer that beateth them extreameleye.'

From Jamestown they penetrated up the river by degrees to a place at the '*Falles*,' where they founded a settlement, and called it *Nonsuch*, because 'they knew no place so strong, so pleasant and delightful, in Virginia.' This, I presume, was what is now called Richmond. I do not mean to enter into any further details of these matters; having neither time nor patience; although there

is something in the fire-side simplicity and minuteness of these early historians that is inexpressibly interesting to the descendants and countrymen of the first old argonauts of this western world. But to copy these is rather a tedious job ; and so I must refer you to the history itself, which, however, is very scarce. In it you will read the familiar details of the progress of the colonists, the treachery of the ' salvages,' the gallantry of Smith—the treason of certain Dutchmen, and, above all, the beautiful and romantic story of the tutelary angel Pocahontas :—how she saved Smith first, and afterward the colony from extermination—how she married ' to Master John Rolfe, an honest gentleman, of good behaviour'—how she went to England, was christened Rebecca, and died, in 1617, making a ' goodlie and religious ende.' All this you will find told with that picturesque simplicity and nature, which so often accompanies the relations of those who tell what they have seen, and which is so infinitely preferable to the laboured and rhetorical flourishes of after writers, whose art seems to consist in spreading the least possible quantity of matter over the greatest possible surface.

Though I abhor copying any thing, and had rather write out of my own head, as the saying is, a great deal, yet I cannot just now refrain from transcribing the following curious directions for the outfit of such 'as shall have cause to provide to go to Virginia, whereby greate numbers may in parte conceive the better how to provide for themselves.' It is worth all the vague talk in the world about the state of the times, and the simplicity of living among the first adventurers.

|                                                                                         | <i>s.</i> | <i>d.</i> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| 'A Monmouth cap,.....                                                                   | 1         | 10        |
| 3 Falling banda,.....                                                                   | 1         | 3         |
| 3 Shirts,.....                                                                          | 7         | 6         |
| 1 Waste coat,.....                                                                      | 2         | 2         |
| 1 Suit of canvas,.....                                                                  | 7         | 6         |
| 1 Suit of frize,.....                                                                   | 10        | 0         |
| 1 Suit of cloth,.....                                                                   | 15        | 0         |
| 3 Paire of Irish stockings,.....                                                        | 4         | 0         |
| 4 Paire of shoes,.....                                                                  | 8         | 8         |
| 1 Paire of garters,.....                                                                | 0         | 10        |
| 1 Dozen points,.....                                                                    | 0         | 8         |
| 1 Paire of canvas sheets,.....                                                          | 8         | 0         |
| 7 Ells of canvas, to make a bed. to be filled<br>in Virginia, serving for two men,..... | 8         | 0         |
| 5 Ells of coarse canvas, to make a bed at sea<br>for two men,.....                      | 5         | 0         |
| A coarse rug at sea, for two men,.....                                                  | 6         | 0         |

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14 6 0.

What would one of our spruce supercargoes say to such an outfit for a new world, I wonder, Frank? The whole of the indispensable necessities for a family emigrating to Virginia, clothes, victuals, arms, tools, furniture, &c. is estimated by the writer at twenty pounds!

Thus have I fairly settled Virginia, and as fairly settled you down in it with my own hand. I will bring its history down to the present time in as few words as possible. Like other states it grew, and spread, and flourished, and increased in population by the good old way, only a good deal faster than they before did these things; the women, as will be found by experience, always accommodating themselves to the exigencies of a new country. In a little while the stately thatched castles of Jamestown became crowded with little white-headed urchins, that grew by rolling and sunning themselves in the sand,—and when they got to be men, the hive swarmed, and the young bees went forth, made a new hive, which swarmed again,—until in process of time the land was peopled, and became a goodly state. Neither Neptune, nor Jupiter, nor Minerva, took them especially under their protection: nor did Medea assist them in

overcoming the obstacles in their way by any of the arts of magic. Fortitude, valour, perseverance, industry, and little Pocahontas, were their tutelary deities; and their golden fleece, fields of corn, and plantations of tobacco. Good bye.



### LETTER III.

DEAR FRANK,

THE first settlers of Virginia generally located larger tracts than those to the north, because they saw more clearly its prospective value, or that the early introduction of slaves enabled them to cultivate more extensively. Hence arose the distinction subsisting between the two parts of the Union—the one being occupied by farmers, cultivating farms, the other by planters, cultivating plantations.

To this day, the land in the occupancy of individuals lies mostly in large tracts, some of them containing several thousand acres. In one of my late excursions previous to setting out on my *grand tour*, I spent several days at the seat of one of these planters; who, by the way, was a lady, and such a one as you will not see every day,

**Frank.** In the place of general description, which is for the most part vague and unsatisfactory, take the following picture ; which, however, is a favourable one ; as the establishment was one of the most liberal and hospitable of any in Virginia.

The master of the house, at least the gentleman who officiated as such, was a son-in-law of the family, who dressed exceedingly plain, and who, I soon found, was a well-educated, lively, good-humoured, sensible man ; though if I were to tell you, and you to tell your good lady-aunt Kate, that he never drank any thing but water, she would no more believe it, than she believes in the story of parson P—'s amorous propensities. A stranger here, is just as much at home as a child in its cradle. Indeed I have heard a story of a gentleman from our part of the world, who stopt here, *en passant*, with his wife, carriage, and servants ; forgot in a little time that he was not at home, and staid more than half a year ! Nay, so far did this delusion extend, that the lady visiter forgot herself so completely, as to find fault with the visits of the respectable country squires to the hospitable mansion, and to refuse to sit at table with them ! In short, I am credibly informed, she

quarrelled with a most respectable old silver family teapot, which still keeps its stand on the breakfast table, and out of which I used to drink tea with infinite satisfaction,—because it was not gold, such as they used at her father's.

A day's residence here convinces you that you occasion no restraint; consequently that you are welcome; and therefore you feel all the freedom of home. Whenever I see the servants running about—the house in the hurry of preparation, and the furniture turned topsy turvy on my arrival, I make my visit very short; because I know by my own experience, that people never like what gives them trouble, and however they be inclined to give a hearty welcome, must inevitably be glad of my departure. Here the ladies attend, as usual, to their own amusements and employments. You are told the carriage or horses are at your service—that you can fish, or hunt, or lounge, or read, just as you please; and every one makes his choice.

The plantation is large; containing, I believe, between nine and ten thousand acres; and several hundred negroes are attached to it. Some of the females are employed in taking care of the chil-

dren, or in household occupations; others in the fields; while the old ones enjoy a sort of otium cum dignitate, at their quarters. These quarters consist of log cabins, disposed in two rows on either side a wide avenue, with each a little garden, in which they raise vegetables. White-washed and clean, they exhibited an appearance of comfort, which, in some measure, served to reconcile me to bondage. At the door of one of these, as we walked this way one evening, stood a little old negro, with his body bent in a curve, and his head as white as snow, leaning on what an Irishman would call a shillalah. He was the patriarch of the tribe; and enjoyed in his old age a life of perfect ease. You might hear him laugh half a mile; and he seemed to possess a full portion of that unreflecting gayety, which, happily for his race, so generally falls to their portion, and perhaps makes them some amends for the loss of freedom. Relying on their master for the supply of all their wants, they are in a sort of state of childhood,—equally exempt with children, from all the cares of providing support and subsistence, for their offspring. This old man is of an unknown age; his birth being beyond history or tra-

dition; and having once been in the service of Lord Dunmore, he looks down with a dignified contempt on the plebeian slaves around him. The greatest aristocrat in the world, is one of these fellows who has belonged to a great man,—I mean with the exception of his master.

The harvest commenced while I was here; and you would have been astonished, to see what work they made with a field of wheat, containing, I was told, upwards of five hundred acres. All hands turned out; and by night it was all in shocks. An army of locusts could not have swept it away half so soon, had it been green. I happened to be riding through the fields at twelve o'clock, and saw the women coming out singing, gallantly bonnetted with large trays, containing ham and corn bread,—a food they prefer to all other. It was gratifying to see them enjoying this wholesome dinner; for since their lot is beyond remedy, it was consoling to find it mitigated by kindness and plenty. I hope, and trust, that this practice is general; for though the present generation cannot be charged with this system of slavery, they owe it to humanity—to the reputation of their country—they stand charged with an awful accountability

to him who created this difference in complexion, to mitigate its evils as far as possible.

We, in our part of the world, are accustomed to stigmatize Virginia and the more southern states, with the imputed guilt of the system of slavery which yet subsists among them,—although records are still extant which show that it was entailed upon their ancestors by the British government; which encouraged the importation of slaves into these colonies, in spite of the repeated remonstrances of the colonial legislatures. The present generation found them on its hands,—and the great majority of planters with whom I conversed, lament an evil which cannot be cured by immediate emancipation—which seems almost to baffle the hopes of futurity—and which, while it appears as a stain on the lustre of their freedom, seems almost beyond the reach of a remedy. The country beyond the mountains has few slaves: and if I ever get there, I shall attempt perhaps to sketch the difference of character and habits originating in that circumstance.

I left this most respectable and hospitable mansion, after staying about a week; at the end of which I began to be able to account for the delu-

sion of the gentleman and lady I told you about in the first part of this letter. I began to feel myself mightily at home; and, as the Virginians say, felt a *heap* of regret at bidding the excellent lady and her family good bye. She had two little daughters not grown up; who are receiving that sort of domestic education at home, which is very common in Virginia. They perhaps will not dance better than becomes a modest woman, as some ladies do X  
 • —nor run their fingers so fast over a piano—nor wear such short petticoats as our town-bred misses; but they will probably make amends for these deficiencies, by the chaste simplicity of their manners—the superior cultivation of their minds, and the unadulterated purity of their hearts. They will, to sum up all in one word, make better wives for it, Frank,—the only character in which a really valuable woman can ever shine. The oldest was a fair blue-eyed lassie, who, I prophesy, will one day be the belle of Virginia.

The turn which my letter has unaccountably taken, brings to my mind, what I had like to have forgot,—a manuscript work, which afforded me infinite satisfaction, and tickled me in some of my susceptible parts. I used to lay on the sopha in

the stately hall, during the sultry part of the day, and read it with wonderful gusto. It was written by an ancestor of the lady with whom I was a guest,—a high man in his day. Strangers, as they sail up James river, are still shown the house, where he once lived in princely splendour; giving welcome and shelter to high and low that passed that way. Judging by the work, the author was a deep scholar; a man of great observation, and a sly joker on womankind. He never misses an opportunity of giving a shrewd cut at them; and as I especially recollect, records with great satisfaction, the theological opinions of one Bearskin, an Indian philosopher, who accompanied him in running the line between Virginia and North Carolina.

Bearskin's paradise was an improvement on that of Mahomet. It was peopled with beautiful maids, gifted with every personal charm, and endowed with every intellectual gift; of which last they made the most excellent use—by never speaking a word. In addition to this, they were extremely docile and good-natured; obeying every wish or command, of course, without the least grumbling. The sage Bearskin's place of punishment, was a

terrible place ; containing nothing but ugly old women, who—but let us not insult the memory of our mothers and grandmothers, who some of them doubtless were not beauties, if I may judge by the family pictures. The style of this work is, I think, the finest specimen of that grave, stately, and quaint mode of writing fashionable about a century ago, that I have ever met with any where. Good bye.



## LETTER IV.

*DEAR FRANK,*

**ONE** of the first things that strikes a Northern man, who flounders into Virginia, or either of the more southern states, loaded with a pack of prejudices as large as a pedlar's, is, that he has, all life long, been under a very mistaken notion of the state of their manners. So, at least, it fared with me, who, you know, had a singular antipathy to gouging, and mint julaps, the latter of which I have, however, pretty nearly got over. Before I had been long in this part of the world, I discovered, to my great surprise, that the people were very much like other folks, only a little more hospitable; and it is now my settled opinion, notwithstanding Mr. Morse and other high authorities, that a civil, honest, well-meaning man, like myself, may traverse the southern states, mountains.

and all, without being either obliged to fight, without special reason, or put up with insults from any body. Every day's experience, in short, convinces me, that the people of our part of the world have been much misled by the idle tales of travelling pedlars, sent out to buy tobacco and cotton, or by the unneighbourly arts of men, knowing better, but misrepresenting for party purposes.

“Ould Virginia,” which, according to the proverb, “never tires,” has come in for a full share of this ignorant or interested obloquy; for it seems that her sister states have never been brought to forgive her, for not only producing a Washington, but, with an indecorous kind of prodigality, furnishing three or four other presidents in succession. This has scandalized the other states desperately; for each one, as a matter of course, thinks itself entitled to give a president in time, even though it may have so happened that it never produced a man whose talents and opportunities qualified him for that high station. However I may lament this misfortune of poor Virginia, I don't think she is so very much to blame for producing a succession of

such distinguished men, and hold, that we of the north are, in duty bound, to forgive her, provided she promise never to do so again. But, whether she does or not, I will confess to you, that such is my want of the true local *amor patria*, that, provided we get good presidents, I care not what state they come from; since, somehow or other, I have taken up an odd notion, that the people of the United States constitute one great nation; that whether a man be born east, west, north, or south, provided he is born within the limits of our country, he is still an American; and, that the attempt to put in claims to the presidency distinct from merit and talents, originated in the petty ambition of grovelling politicians, who could never expect to gain distinction, except by pampering the vanity of their constituents at home.

Be this as it may, I think it is much to be wished, that the people of the various divisions of the United States were a little more acquainted with each other, for, I am satisfied, they would like one another the better for it. At present, like the tenants of one of those amazing high houses in Edinburgh, that accommodate several families, though living, as it were, under the same

roof, they have scarcely a speaking acquaintance. The impressions, which they long since took up on trust, with respect to each other, from ignorant or story-telling travellers, interested in deceiving or sporting with their credulity; the stories of horseracing, drinking, and gouging, on one hand, and of tricking and witch-burning on the other, that have passed current for a century or more, are still received as pictures of existing manners, though even, at any time, they were of rare occurrence, and very many of these practices are altogether extinct. The changes which succeed each other, in this camelion country, more rapidly than in any other part of the world, have, it would seem, passed unmarked and unrecorded, while the good people still continue to believe and tremble. The impressions of the natives here, with respect to those of the eastward, are still tinged with the remembrance of witch-burnings; and not a pious dame in our northern parts, that would not compound for her son coming back with one eye left, from an excursion into the back parts of the southern states.

Such foolish prejudices are worthy of honest John Bull, who, from time immemorial, has be-

lieved that his neighbours, the French, eat frogs, and are destitute of religion, as well as of every manly and womanly virtue. But our people, who all read, and write, and think, and reason—some right—others wrong, ought to be ashamed of themselves, to believe so badly of their countrymen and neighbours. It is a foolish absurdity, even the product of national folly, or national antipathy, to assert, that cotemporary and neighbouring people, having the same lights of religion, living under similar laws, and enjoying, equally, the advantages of education, should be so essentially different in morals. They may differ, it is true, in manners; but there is no philosophical reason for their exhibiting a contrast of morals, or that one should be so much wiser and better than the other. I believe, if we place them fairly in comparison, with no interest to allure us astray, and no antipathies to tempt us from the truth, we shall find, that an inferiority in one point will be met by a superiority in another; that, though they may differ in various respects, there is no general disparity; and that, on the whole, the scale remains equally balanced. There are two distinct classes of faults in the world; one open, palpable,

and offensive; the other, secret, sly, and hypocritical. Those who commit the former, are worse than they seem; and those who indulge in the latter, are not half so good as they appear. The former are offenders against decency and the laws of man; the latter against virtue and the Divinity.

But I know you hate prosing, and not without good reason, since I remember you had a surfeit of it, when, by way of growing wise, you accompanied our friend, Dr. —, on a scientific tour to the seven mile stone. This worthy scholar never had an original idea but once in his life, when I recollect he was delivered of a swinging absurdity. I shall never forget the time, when he drew a conclusive argument in favour of the immortality of the soul, from his capacity of deriving such wonderful pleasure in the contemplation of a flower through a little magnifying glass. But it is time for us to get on in our travels.

I commenced my regular tour at N—, where I was lucky enough to fall in with our old fellow-student, Oliver B—, who, you may remember, was expelled the College, for taking such unwarrantable freedoms with the venerable classics.

which he always translated to suit his own purposes. This habit gave mortal offence to the Professor of Humanity; for it not only made the class laugh, but, what was far worse, caused the Professor sometimes to forget his gravity. But the grand offence was against the Professor of Theology, and Theologians, you know, never forgive. One cold morning, when, as usual, we were called up at daylight, to prayers, I suppose to make us in love with praying all our lives, by connecting it with such agreeable associations, somebody, in coming into the cold Chapel, exclaimed, "*O tempora*;" Oliver, stretching himself out with a most significant yawn, replied, "*O mores*," drawling it out, to make it sound like *more ease*. This occasioned a mighty tittering, which, being traced to Noll, he was had up before the Faculty, and, like poor Cinna, the poet, who was killed by Marc Antony's mob, for making bad verses, was expelled for marring good Latin.

While at College, he was considered the best Greek and Latin scholar of the class; and, for Latin puns, no man in Philadelphia could come up to him. But his hobby, at present, is geology.

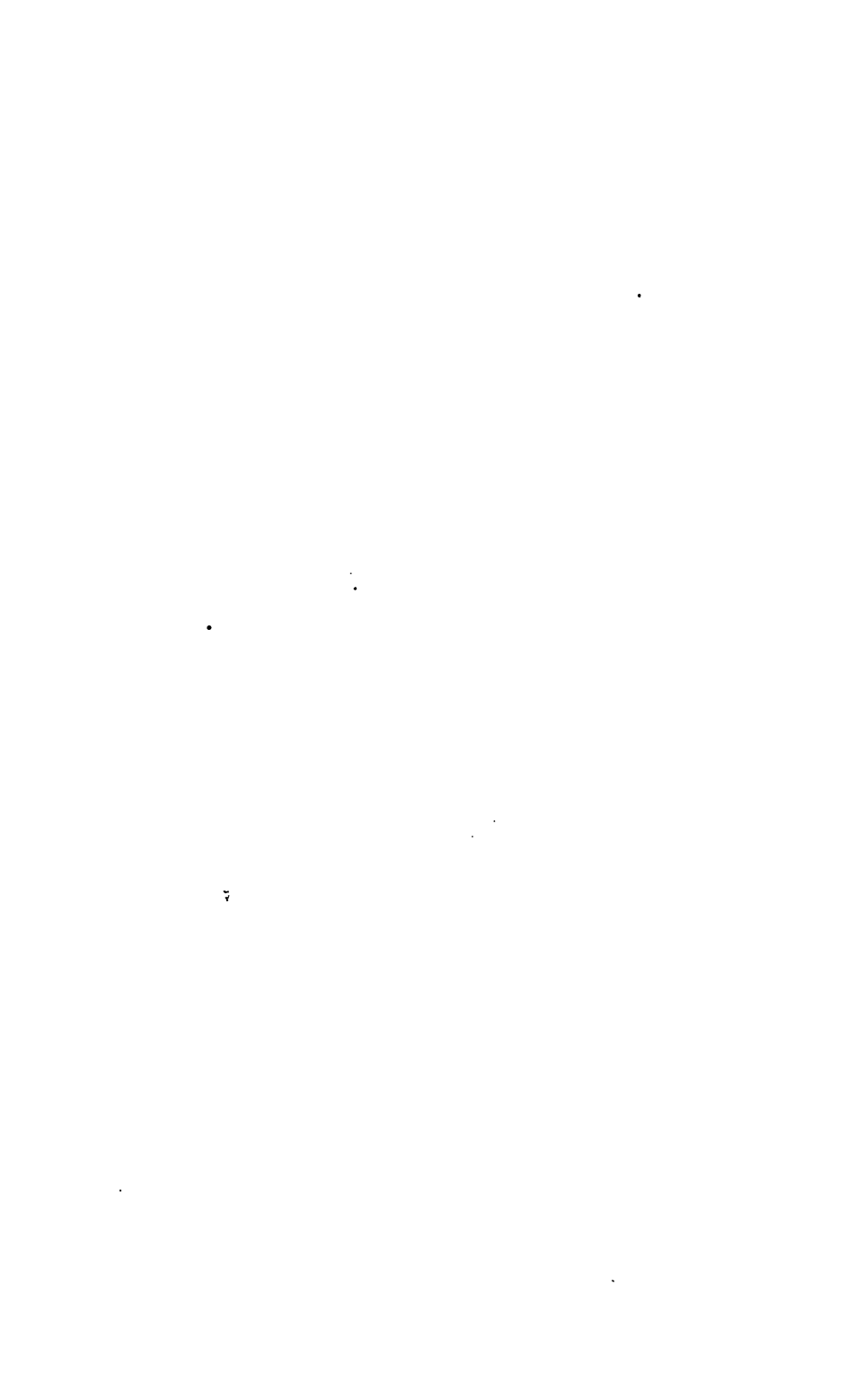
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gy, the fashionable science of the day. Last year he was hard at chymistry, and Sir Humphrey Davy was his hero. But he grew tired of this improving science, which he declared was always playing him tricks; for, by the time he had fairly got to understand one theory, another came, and as fairly knocked it on the head; so that he was not only compelled to begin to learn, but to unlearn anew. Monsieur Cuvier is now his oracle, but shares his attentions with Werner and Hutton, the present fashionable manufacturers of worlds. *Noll* has made three worlds already, though we have only travelled three days; and I begin to find this so easy a matter, that I think of trying my hand at it myself soon. Such trifles are nothing to the philosophers, who create worlds as easy as boys blow soap bubbles.

Our old acquaintance having an idle summer on his hands, for he has not yet chosen his profession, agreed to accompany me, and we accordingly set forth on horseback, carrying our *plunder* (as the Virginians call baggage) in a light Jersey wagon. The good women along the road, take us for travelling pedlars, and come out continually to bargain for pins, needles, handkerchiefs, and such

*2 false*

like matters. It is very rare here to see gentlemen travellers carry their plunder in any way but a small portmanteau fixed to the saddle; as it is not customary to dress fine at the Springs, or elsewhere: those who do, are apt to be taken for Black Legs, or Horse Jockeys. Good bye.



## LETTER V.

▼ *DEAR FRANK,*

**ENTERING** 'Ould Virginia,' from the Chesapeake Bay, you travel upon what is called by the learned in these matters, the Region of *Sea Sand*. But, by the way, I ought to tell you, I caught a fresh-water fish in the Bay; whence I conclude, to a certainty, it was once a great fresh-water lake, where the waters of the rivers, gradually accumulating, at last broke through, between Capes Charles and Henry, with an intention of making a violent inroad upon the ocean. But they reckoned without their host; for the sea fairly turned the tables upon them, and, in revenge, changed all the great lake salt,\* making a pretty kettle of fish of it. In this you see the wonderful equality, or, to use a diplomatic phrase, 'reciprocity,' in the operations of nature, who, having, according

A \*

\* "making the green - one red  
nonsense."

to the testimony of a learned philosopher, metamorphosed the waters of the great lakes from salt into fresh, did, like an honest lady, make the salt waters amends for this liberty, by turning the fresh waters into salt in another quarter.

The Region of Sea Sand is, according to the present fashionable system, an accession from the sea, which, in this way, seems to acknowledge a sort of fealty to mother earth, by paying her a yearly tribute of fine white sand, beautiful shells, and pretty round polished pebbles ; which, I dare say, please the old lady wonderfully. In process of time this mixture becomes, by the aid of vegetable decomposition, a fine rich soil, level, and without a single rock, or even stone as large as an egg. It was on these flats that the early adventurers made their first effectual settlement, from whence they gradually penetrated into the Region of *River Alluvions*, of which I shall speak anon. Along the rivers, winding through these extensive plains, lived, not more than an age ago, a race of stately planters, whose hospitality gave a character to Virginia, which it still retains. Strangers were always welcome, and soon forgot they were strangers. But time, the exhaustion of the soil,

by a careless mode of cultivation, together with the division of property, brought about by the salutary operation of the statute abolishing entails, which is the true foundation of our republican system, all combined, have changed the face of things. A few of these ancient establishments are still kept up, but many of the houses are shut; others have passed into the hands of the industrious, or the speculating, whose modes of thinking, feeling, and acting, are totally different; and, with here and there an exception, nothing now remains, but the traditionary details of some aged matron, who lives only in the recollections of the past, of ancient modes, and ancient hospitality. Trade and industry are good things; but they are not without that alloy of evil which seems to incorporate itself with every mode and habit of life. Those who get money with difficulty, part from it with difficulty; and, although they may add to their own enjoyments, and to the wealth of a country, seldom, I believe, are either very disinterestedly hospitable or generous. They certainly rarely partake, in any great degree, of those lofty feelings, which set one man high above another in the scale of being, and which are so

frequently found among those who are neither very industrious nor very saving. The more, and the nearer I look at human life, the more I am satisfied of this great truth—that the only perfect system of equality is to be found in the distributions of Providence ; that there is nearly the same proportion of good and evil in all classes of society, except one, as well as the same proportion of enjoyment ; and that mankind are happy, not according to the wealth they enjoy, but to the virtues they practise. Great enjoyments are coupled with great sufferings—the capacity for exquisite happiness is ever the accompaniment of a great susceptibility to misery—great faults and great virtues belong to the same family ;—so do small virtues, and little vices ; and although one man may suffer for a great crime, while another, guilty of a multiplicity of small ones, escapes, still it may reasonably be questioned whether the sum total of the one does not amount to the single enormity of the other. And now let us get on in our travels,—and I hope you are not impatient ; for a man can't always be on horseback ; he must stop to bait himself and his horse : and in like manner I cannot always be telling you

of what I see; for what I see here, belongs to other people; what I think and feel is my own, and therefore I am fond of showing it, as a mother is of exhibiting her child, even though it is not worth looking at; which is very often the case with my thoughts.

The transition from the region of *sea sand*, to that of *river alluvious* is very abrupt; it is only climbing a hill, and you pop on the latter, which is a deposit of the rivers, in like manner as the former is of the ocean. The rivers, not to be behindhand with the sea, bring down a tribute to the earth. But the sly rogues play the old lady a trick similar to that of the man who stole his neighbour's purse to pay a debt he owed him. They only pay in the low lands what they filch from her in the mountains, which is what they call "robbing Peter to pay Paul." If it was not for this nefarious swindling, the earth would probably grow so large in time, as to destroy the whole system of the universe by increasing in attraction as in size, until all the planets would come shooting towards her, and break their own heads, as well as the old lady's. But let the modern makers of heaven and earth, who scandalize

the honest rivers in this way, look to it ;—all I can say is, it is well for these gentry that there are no watery gods now-a-days, except Daddy Neptune, who has enough to do to defend the rights of the ocean, to take their part. You remember what a scrape one of Homer's heroes got into by insulting the Scamander, which fell into such a passion that it fried itself dry in its own channel, inso-much that none of the learned, except M. Chevalier, have been able to find it since. For this reason honest Dan Homer is shrewdly suspected of having made that river pretty much as the great giant Gargantera did the little river Bievre, when he gave the people of Paris a benediction from the top of a high steeple. The learned indeed, are as great doubters as Governor Van Twiller. One sect of philosophers doubted their own existence, until a cunning rogue demonstrated it by a two-legged syllogism, to wit, "I think, therefore I exist," which he put in Latin, for fear the vulgar should laugh at him, and ask what stronger proof he could give of his thinking, than of his existing. Another very great philosopher swore that every thing was ideal in this world, until he ran against a post, and was asked by a

wag if there was any *matter* in it. And now they begin to doubt that there ever was such a city, or such a war, as that of Troy, because they can't find the Scamander and Simois, in the relative situations described by Homer, while at the same time they palm upon us the theory of sea sands, and river alluvions, under the operation of which the earth is undergoing perpetual changes. But the honest truth of the matter I believe is, that every avenue to rational originality is so completely choked up by preceding writers, that there is now no way of being original except by being absurd. O, for another caliph Omar, or Bully Cockburn, to burn all the libraries, that we poor moderns might deal in something else besides original absurdities, or servile imitations!

The contrast between the country I passed through in going up to Richmond, and that between it and the south mountain, to whatever cause it may be owing, is sufficiently marked to give rise to a distinction among Geologists. It is here that all the rivers are broken by falls; for it seems they have no other way of getting down hill, but by falling. The separation of these two regions is every where marked by an interruption

in the navigation, except in the solitary instance of the great Mohegan, vulgarly called Hudson, which bears its waters triumphantly through Bull Hill, Crow's Nest, Dunderbarrack, and Anthony's Nose, with a current deep, clear, and unagitated, as if it had not cost him a single effort. Yet have the people of this part of the world the unparalleled assurance to compare James river and the Potomac, to the great Mohegan, which is the very Hannibal of rivers, inasmuch as it breaks through mountains without making a single false step by the way. Other rivers, to wit, James and the Potomac, are obliged to tumble down hill as well as they can; and it is no doubt owing to the anticipation of this unpleasant job that they are so much given to murmuring. Now it is a singular fact, that neither the great Mohegan, nor any body living on its banks, was ever known to murmur, except just about the time of electing a new President from old Virginia.

I am now at Richmond, the seat of government, pro tem. of the State. It will probably not remain so long, as they are making a stir west of the Blue Ridge; and it seems the destiny of this country, that power should travel to the west, as that was the way it first came here. A convention

has been called together to consider this and other matters of mortal grievance, under which the good people have been persuaded they have long laboured, without knowing any thing about them, as often happens. The result of this struggle between the two sections of the country, will probably be the division of the state into two great parties, distinct from federalism and anti-federalism, which will in a great degree destroy its political weight in the general government. Such has been the case with the state of New-York, where the rivalry of ambitious individuals has from time to time so distracted the people, that no one could depend upon its political consistency, or its support of any cause or system whatever, for four-and-twenty hours together. This changing without any apparent cause, however, it cannot be denied, is a proof of her independence, as well as of a determination to do as she pleases. So long as she perseveres in this vacillating course, it is not to be expected that she will attain to her proper influence in the union, which is only to be acquired by a uniform devotion to the same political principles.—Instead of marshalling under the banner of principles, we find

them slavishly devoting themselves to *men*, and submitting to be called Burrrites, Lewisites, or Clintonians, like the abject followers of some feudal chief. Perhaps they don't know it; but the republicans of the other states look on, and despise such a rabble of retainers, and lose all confidence in a state thus in leading-strings.

The city of Richmond deserves to have a song written about it, as well as Richmond-hill, where lived a lass, in England; and were I a poet, it should not be without it twenty-four hours. It is beautifully situated, just on the line of division between the region of sea-sand, and of river alluvious, and at the foot of James River rapids. Above, the river foams and roars among the rocks; below, it winds gently and quietly through a sweet landscape of meadows, and golden harvest fields. It was once, and until lately, inhabited principally by a race of most ancient and respectable planters, having estates in the country, who chose it for their residence for the sake of social enjoyment. They formed a society, which, I am sorry to say, is now seldom to be met with in any of our cities: I mean, a society of people, not exclusively monopolized by money-making pursuits,

but of liberal education, liberal habits of thinking and acting, and possessing both leisure and inclination to cultivate those feelings, and pursue those objects, which exalt our nature, rather than increase our fortune. I am however one of those who, like honest Candide, think all things happen for the best, and that this is the best of all possible worlds. I therefore don't actually quarrel with the money-getting spirit that pervades all our great cities, to the utter exclusion of the encouragement of literature, except so far as it is necessary to pen an advertisement. It makes men rich, if not liberal and enlightened: and in places where wealth is synonymous with virtue and intellect, it may, for aught I know, answer in lieu of both. I shall never forget how the good alderman, your father, dropt his knife and fork, one day, when I asserted at his table, that —— the great merchant, who was actually president of a bank, and had the credit of being worth millions, was, in feeling, intellect, and action, no better than a pedlar. The alderman looked at me as if I had abused General Washington or the Bible; and I have never sat at the good man's table since. But without exactly quarrelling with that sordid dis-

position, or that ostentatious, yet vulgar profusion, which in general actuates the people of our great cities, to the exclusion of every nobler pursuit, and all rational economy; still I may venture to lament its universality. In days of yore, Plutus, although he shone in gold and precious stones, hid himself in the bowels of the earth; but now he is seen clothed in ragged bank-notes, taking precedence every where in the city drawing-rooms. There is now no place where a knot of harmless people of moderate fortune can sit down in the undisturbed enjoyment of social ease, or the cultivation of literature and science, free from the intrusion of tobacco, tar, pitch, potash, and cod-fish; sandahs, baftas, buglipoops, and all the jargon of East India commodities. If they have a moderate competency, they are beset by greedy beggars, who, by dint of perseverance, at length tempt them to engage in some profitable speculation, which draws them gradually from their former pursuits, and ingulphs them for ever in the vortex of gain.

In fact, no young man, now-a-days, at least in our commercial places, thinks of sitting down quietly in the enjoyment of wealth, and the culti-

vation of those elegant pursuits which adorn our nature, and exalt a country. Sometimes, indeed, he becomes what is called a gentleman, that is to say, he abandons every useful or honourable pursuit, and either lounges away a contemptible existence in doing nothing, or in doing what he ought not to have done. But the most common fate of young men, in our part of the world, who inherit great fortunes is, to set about making them greater. They seem never to think of the enjoyment of that lofty independence, which is the lot of the young man of wealth who retires to the enjoyment of what has been left him by his fathers. They seem to think there is no alternative between absolute idleness, and absolute devotion to business: nor do they appear to recollect, that the noblest employment of wealth is, to do good with it, and employ the leisure it bestows in the pursuit of knowledge, rather than the accumulation of superfluous riches, which they will not bestow on others, and know not how to enjoy themselves.

These sentiments are exemplified in the case of our two school-fellows, H—— and D——, both of whom, at about the age of three and twenty, inhe-

rited fortunes that would have been ample in any part of the world, and were well educated. H——, who was always turning a penny at school, and cried his eyes out once at losing a sixpence through a crack in the floor of the school, on receiving his fortune, began to look out for bargains; and put himself under the tuition of one of the most experienced *shavers* of the city, to learn all the wretched debasing arts of the trade. In this way he grew richer and richer; and meaner and meaner. If he gave a great dinner, from pure ostentation, he starved his household, while he was eating the dinners given him in turn. He kept a carriage; but it cost him more in whips than in hay, and he saved the expense of his stable in his kitchen. He became at last a great man, according to the city acceptance—for he was a director of a half-broken ensurance company, and bank;—every body looked up to him, not because he *would*, but because he *could* be of service to them; and the president of one of the banks was heard to say publicly one day, that he believed that H—— was one of the most moneyed men in the city. Thus he lived, and thus will he die, without ever having conceived even

the abstract idea of any pursuit, but that of money, money, money; or any enjoyment but in its accumulation.

But little D——, on the contrary, was determined to be a gentleman, according to the fashionable idea of the present day in our cities. As he was to be rich, there was no occasion for him to know any thing—but how to enjoy it like a gentleman. He accordingly took his degree as the first dunce in the college; and the first thing he did on coming to the possession of nearly half a million, was to send out his measure for a suit of clothes to a London tailor. He forthwith enlisted himself under some tavern bucks, and strutted up and down —— with a surtout which saved the Corporation the trouble of sweeping the streets—was seen every where at public places and parties, without doing any thing but yawn at the one, and stand in every body's way in the other, eating pickled oysters. His estimate of a party, where a man of feeling and refinement would go to enjoy elegant society, and rational amusement, was always founded on the quantity of porter , and pickled oysters, handed round. No  he known, on any occasion, to do any one thing

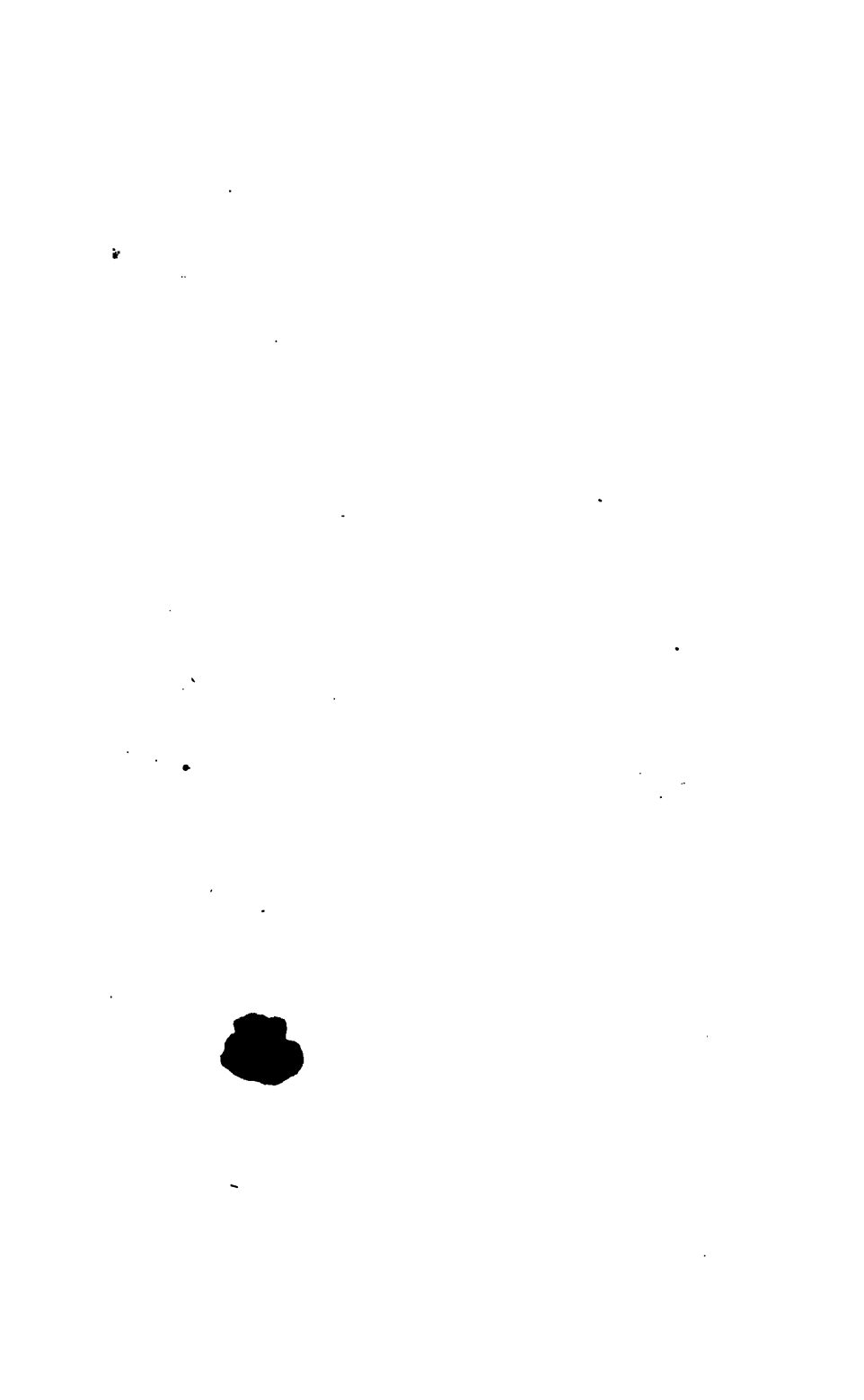
either pleasing or useful,—and, of course, in a little time he attained to the reputation of a fine gentleman; because, as he never did any thing, he must needs be so; employment being unworthy that high character. Some of the best bred people doubted his pretensions, until he thought of finding fault with every thing he heard and saw, when the opinion of his high breeding became unanimous.

Whether the people got tired of him, or he grew tired of the people, I don't exactly know; but in order to get a new gloss, he went abroad, staid six months, and came back vastly improved; for he found this country more intolerable than ever,—a sure sign of excessive refinement, especially as he made a point of proclaiming his opinion aloud at all parties. When I was last at N—— I saw him in a book-store, reading a book upside down, and dressed as follows: to wit, one little hat, with a steeple crown; one pair of corsetts; one coat, so tight he could just breathe; one pair of pantaloons, so immeasurably wide and loose you could hardly see whether they were petticoats or not; I do not select the residue of his costume,—but his hair came out from beneath his hat like an

ostrich's tail, and he stuck out behind like the African Venus. No doubt the ladies found him quite irresistible.

One might moralize and speculate on what had been the different estimation of these young men, at least hereafter, had they pursued a course becoming their fortune and education, and devoted themselves to a useful or brilliant career. Had they employed part of their fortunes, and their leisure, in adorning their minds, and encouraging a taste for refined, elegant, and scientific pursuits. Although perhaps they might not have attained to any lofty eminence, they would have become associated, at least, with those that were eminent. They might have become their patrons, if not their equals, and attained to a blameless, nay, noble immortality, as the munificent encouragers of genius; instead of being, in their lives, the contempt of the virtuous and the wise; and in their deaths, the companions of oblivion. But I have already tired myself, and so—Good bye.





## LETTER VI.

DEAR FRANK,

IN my last letter, if I remember right, I toted <sup>1</sup> X  
you (as they say in Virginia) up to Richmond, by  
what may be called a circumbendibus. Since  
then I have made an excursion to York and Wil-  
liamsburg; the one celebrated as the place where  
the last blow of our revolutionary war was struck;  
the other as having been the ancient seat of the  
state government. York-Town is on the right  
bank of York river, directly at its mouth. X It now  
exhibits an appearance of desolation and decay,  
which, being so seldom seen in our youthful coun-  
try, is the more apt to excite the notice of a  
stranger. These ruins are not so much the effect  
of time, as the consequence of neglect and de-  
sertion, and possess, of course, nothing of the  
interest belonging to antiquities. A few years  
ago a great fire happened here, which completed

'not in this sense.

about fifteen miles from its mouth

the desolation of the place, by singling out, as its victims, with a sort of capricious cruelty, many of the best houses in the town. Immediately opposite to York is the town of Gloucester, consisting, as far as I could see, of a few poplars.

But, whether flourishing or in ruins, York-Town will ever be an object of peculiar interest, as the scene where the progress of European arms terminated, there, and I hope for ever in the New World, whose fate it so long was, to be domineered over by petty states, situated at a distance of three thousand miles, and whose sovereigns, though incapable of governing at home, affected to tyrannize here. The time, I hope, is not far distant, when not an inch of this great continent will be tributary to any other quarter of the globe; and when, if we choose to extend our ambition so far, we may have colonies in Europe, as Europe has so long had in America. Every nation, like every dog, has its day, and the splendours of the civilized world, which rose in the ruddy east, may set at last in the glowing west, equally splendid and glorious.

In the evening I traced the outlines of the British fortifications, accompanied by an escort of

a dozen boys, who pointed out the remains of the house where Lord Cornwallis had his headquarters, and which he was obliged to abandon before the end of the siege, on account of the shower of bombs which fell on it, and at length destroyed every part, but the chimney, which, if I remember right, is yet standing. These lively historians of the "village train" were exceedingly communicative, and answered all my questions with one voice—that is, they all talked at once. There is a tradition current here, the truth of which I cannot vouch for, that after quitting the house I mentioned, Cornwallis occupied a cave, which I was shown, excavated in the side of a bank fronting on the river. It consists of two rooms, cut or scraped, in a soft sandstone, and is thirty or forty feet under ground, so that it is entirely bomb proof. Whether his lordship ever made this his headquarters or not, certain it is, that such is the common tradition here, although I confess, an old weather-beaten Scotsman, living on the beach, close by, asked our servant, "if we were such d—d fools, as to believe that an English general, and a *lord*, would hide himself in a cave?" As to English generals, as far as my ob-

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servation extends, they do things pretty much like other men ; and as for lords, I see no reasonable cause, why they should not be as much afraid of bombs as plain misters. However, I have no disposition to undervalue the prowess of Lord Cornwallis, who, I believe, was a good sort of a man enough, and feel particularly grateful to him for getting cooped up at York, and surrendering as he did to Gen. Washington and our allies.

From York to Williamsburg, is, I believe, about twelve miles up the river. I am not good at counting milestones, and if I were, there is not material for a milestone in all the region of sea sand. This river abounds in fish, oysters, and crabs, and, as might be expected, there are large masses of oyster-shells along the banks, I suppose left there in days of yore by the Indians, and covered, in process of time, by the decomposition of vegetable matter. They are at present, however, made use of to form a cement to the system of our geological school ; which, without this new species of geological lime, would not hold together half a year. If I were to make a settlement in a new country, it should be where never

oyster vegetated, or crab crawled, or fish swam, for each of these is a staunch auxiliary of idleness. Nothing, but the bundle of habits a man carries at his back, makes him an industrious animal, and consequently the greater his wants, the more he will labour. But these fish and crabs afford such provoking facilities to satisfy the most craving of these, that he is thereby enabled to be idle without starving—and idleness is vice to those who cannot supply the tedium of bodily inertness by the labours of the mind. This is one bad effect of great oyster-banks; another is, that the shells, in process of time, get into the hands of the philosophers, and become, with the assistance of “Babylonian bricks” and “Nimrod straw,” the materials for another Tower of Babel, and a consequent confusion of tongues, enough to puzzle a man out of his senses. The town or city of Williamsburg, once the metropolis of Virginia, and a mighty emporium of tobacco, is built in the form of a W, in compliment to King William; for it is apparent that the first settlers here were right loyal, from the names they gave to different places. There is a fine gothic-looking college here, which I saw at a little distance, but did not

visit it, having had quite enough of colleges in my day. I never go near one, without getting a vertigo, occasioned by the recollection of some of those confounded mathematics, which sent me headlong to the tail of the class, while honest L—— *demonstrated* himself to the head, and got the first honour; though, between ourselves, I was obliged to write his *valedictory*.

The mathematical studies are, undoubtedly, at the head of the useful, but they ought not to be made the sole objects of preference in the distribution of college honours, as is too much the case I think in our country. In my opinion, too little attention, by far, is paid to Classical Literature and Belles Lettres, and to this neglect, in all probability, may be traced, in some considerable degree, the want of that classical and Belles Lettres taste, which, in all polite nations, is considered the great characteristic of a well-educated gentleman. The most vulgar of men may be a great practical mathematician, but I never yet met with a man, eminent as a classical and Belles Lettres scholar, who did not possess a considerable degree of refinement of mind and manners. Polite literature ought, therefore, I think, to be encour-

raged and rewarded in our colleges, equally, at least, with those sciences which are exclusively and practically useful. If not necessary to the wants, it is essential to the beauty and grace of society; is a decisive evidence of politeness, taste, and refinement; and equally contributes to the reputation and happiness of a nation.

There is another portion of the system of education pursued in most of our colleges, which, in reference to its moral effects, deserves, in my mind, to be held up to universal reprobation, as calculated to debase the human mind, at a period when habits are formed, and the foundation laid for every thing useful and noble, or base and contemptible. I mean the detestable statute lately introduced into many of these institutions, obliging the student either to become his own accuser; to betray his associates; or pledge his honour to a falsehood. For example: if a bell is rung at night, and wakes up the drowsy Professor, or any equally important prank is played by some unknown offender, it is the duty, enjoined by this statute, for any student acquainted with the transaction, to inform the Professor forthwith, even though the offender be his brother, or dearest

associate. If, however, no one is found contemptible enough to become a voluntary traitor to his companions, the whole of the students are called up, and those acquainted with the offender must either turn accusers, or pledge their *honour* to a falsehood, by declaring, under that sanction, that they are ignorant of the author of this important transgression. If they refuse either to turn accusers, or tell a falsehood, they are subject to expulsion. What pleasant alternatives, and what an admirable system for inculcating faith and honour into the minds of those, whose stations and opportunities render it probable, that many of them will rise to situations in society, where their examples will have an extensive influence, and their principles and conduct be subjects of national importance. If we want traitors—Benedict Arnolds—this is the way to get them. The first duty—with due reverence to the Faculty of every college, past, present, and future; the first duty of every man, in every situation, is never to do any thing mean or contemptible. No duty obliges him to betray his associates, nor can he ever be placed in any situation to demand the sacrifice of his faith or his honour.

But, in these cases, the student is called upon, by the guardians of his principles, to make these sacrifices, for what? for the discovery of some little peccadillo, of no consequence; some piece of boyish mischief, or harmless waggy, innocent in itself, or only wicked, as it may please the Faculty to decide on its turpitude. Of what consequence are these slight circumstances to the interests or the usefulness of colleges? and of what consequence is it not to society, that men should be educated to despise treachery and falsehood? It is not one of the least of the ill effects of this dangerous statute, that the most stupid and contemptible of the students, for the most part, obtain the honours of the colleges, by becoming the talebearers of their class, in preference to young men whose talents and acquirements are immeasurably superior, but who, sustained by the lofty pride of genius, disdain to recommend themselves by such debasing subserviency.

There was at P——, a young fellow from South Carolina, and another from somewhere else, I forget where. The former entered head of the class, the other next; and, during the two

first years, there was a contest for precedence. The Carolinian was a fine spirited lad, with a great deal more of genius than of industry, but with enough of the latter to give him a decided superiority over his competitor, who was heavy and cunning, but as industrious as a beaver. A new President was appointed, at the beginning of the third year, who, forgetting that the college was not a Theological school, always gave the preference at examinations to boys who told tales, like good lads, and prayed through their noses. With the natural cunning, which seems to be the instinct of petty minds, the heavy lad forthwith took to being exceedingly pious, and tickled the President, who had as much curiosity as Aunt Kate, by telling him every thing that was said and done by the students, in their hours of relaxation and confidence. The fruits of this soon appeared. At the next term, the Carolinian made a splendid examination, but the other told the most tales, and was awarded the first place in the class, to the astonishment of every body not in the secret. At commencement, the former delivered an oration of his own, replete with classical and original beauties; the latter spoke

one written for him by the President, on the necessity of converting the Hottentots, apes, and baboons. The Carolinian is now one of the most distinguished orators of Congress, respected and admired by all honourable men; and the last I heard of the other was, his being prosecuted and heavily fined, for telling some tales, not quite true, about a young lady, in pursuance of the old habit he learned at college. He teaches a school at —, but is studying divinity, with a view, I suppose, of getting into a profession so justly venerated, that it not unfrequently rescues ignorance, arrogance, and stupidity from merited contempt.

I am very much mistaken, if the enforcement of this detestable statute will not go near to destroy the institutions where it is adopted, by subjecting the students either to expulsion, or driving them into open resistance. To say the truth, I don't think it would be a subject of much regret, if this were to be the case, since I consider it of much less consequence, that a man should be without a diploma, than that he should be debased by a habit of talebearing and treachery to his companions. If colleges cannot exist under a different code of morality, the sooner they die

the better ; we can get our boys educated at academies and grammar schools ; and it is better to go without a *degree*, than live debased. I am satisfied, that the attempt to enforce this niggardly statute will, ere long, shake these institutions to the centre, for the days of monkish ignorance, and consequent slavish submission to every thing which monks prescribed, are past. Even boys cannot now be taught that it is a *principle of false honour*, to refuse to become spies and tell-tales.

A word or two more on the subject of colleges. I was never much struck with the good sense or propriety of placing these establishments in small towns, rather than large cities. If this is done with a view to preserve the morals of the students from corruption, I believe the object is not generally attained. The vices of small towns are generally of a lower and more contemptible character, and principally connected with the tavern. In great cities the hours of relaxation may be spent in various amusements, innocent, and even elegant in their nature. Nay, there is something in the very aspect of a large town, in the perpetual succession of objects novel and various, that pre-

sents continual amusement to the mind, without the trouble of seeking it laboriously or expensively. But in the desperate monotony of a small country town, there is but one resource for passing leisure time—and that is the tavern, where, too often, is imbibed not only low manners, but a vice which, of all others, carries with it the surest ruin. I mean the habit of tippling—the *consumption* of the mind—fatal and incurable. I have seen men, who had been gamblers, or who had lost themselves for a time in the depths of licentious indu'gence, return, once, twice, to virtue and usefulness, like the dove to the ark. But the habit of drunkenness operates as a sentence of eternal banishment from all that is useful and beautiful ; it is the third and last flight of the Patriarch's dove, and he who takes it, returns no more.

I consider, therefore, that a situation, which, more than any other, exposes a young man to the temptation of this beastly and incurable vice, ought to possess very many advantages to counterbalance this most serious objection, an objection by no means imaginary. Those who may chance to stop at a tavern, in one of the col-

legiate towns, cannot fail to observe a number of young men lounging about the place, inside or out, some in slippers and morning gowns, others in buckish coats or long surtouts. These are students, sent hither by their parents, to keep them out of idleness and bad habits. The habit of frequenting taverns almost invariably leads to a habit of tippling. A man may go thither, at first, without any inclination to drink, but simply to hear the news, or see the travellers arrive. Here two temptations await him. He sees others drink, and he perceives that he is not a welcome guest, unless he calls for something. Those who have seen, by what fine and imperceptible threads we are drawn, easily, slowly, yet surely, into the most fatal habits, ought to tremble, when they place their offspring in a situation where they are thus assailed. For my part, I should consider a young man, placed within reach of theatres, and other amusements, so obnoxious to Professors, and where he could enjoy, at intervals, elegant and improving society, as in a situation far more favourable to his intellect, morals, and manners, than in a little town, where all his amusements and associates are sought in a tavern.

The principal arguments I have heard urged in favour of establishing colleges in small towns, are fewer temptations to vice, or idleness, and superior cheapness. I have remarked on the former, and as to the two latter, I put no faith in them whatever. If the strong incentives of the fear of disgrace on one hand, and the hope of distinction on the other, aided by ~~that~~ love of knowledge, which is the noble characteristic of human beings, the source of their superiority over all other animals, are not sufficient to make boys study, is it to be supposed they will be driven to it, by the mere absence of other amusements? Besides, the argument in effect does not apply here, because the amusements of a village tavern, however low, are still amusements, and the temptations of drunkenness are just as much to be dreaded, as those of the theatre. To the argument of superior cheapness, I have little to say, except that I look upon it as a consideration, which, even were it well founded, ought not to weigh against the dangers and disadvantages I have slightly sketched.

After this "Big Talk," I have hardly time to say, that Williamsburg seems to be experiencing

the fate of all the works of man, none of which, except the labours of his mind, (and the Pyramids,) seem destined to last for ever. "God made the country, and man made the town;" and the difference of the work is exemplified in their progress and decay. The one is subject only to the operation of the elements, while the other depends for its growth and prosperity on a thousand accidents. The variable course of trade; the caprices of a despot; the establishment of a college, or the opening of a canal, can make a city flourish or decay. But he who draws his support from the bosom of the earth is independent of these chances, accidents, and caprices. This is illustrated by the unceasing complaints, petitions, remonstrances, and clamours of merchants and manufacturers, asking protection, monopoly, or bounty, when contrasted with the independent silence of the farmer, who asks nothing from his government, but equal laws, and nothing of heaven, but rain and sunshine. Thus Virginia continues to flourish, while York and Williamsburg continue to decay.

I must not forget to tell you, that the principal tavern at Williamsburg is under the special pa-

tronage of Sir Walter Raleigh, who still stands his ground here, against Gen. Wayne, Gen. Jackson, and other tutelaries, on the great western roads. Wise people, that is to say, people who fancy themselves wise, may undervalue the distinctions of a signpost; but when I see a man's name inscribed upon these tablets of immortality, in various parts of a country, I feel ~~that~~ it has taken deep root. A senate may decree a statue; it is the public sentiment decrees a sign. Sir Wat is dressed in high ton—his hand in his side, his ruff up to his ears, and exhibits the identical smile with which he captivated the virgin affections of good Queen Bess, as is shrewdly suspected. Good bye.



## LETTER VII.



*DEAR FRANK,*

**Y**OUNG nations, like young children, seem destined to endure certain diseases before their constitutions can be said to be well established. So, also, must they encounter a great variety of experience before they can become wise. But nations have a great advantage over us poor single gentlemen mortals, since they often last long enough to reap the benefits of the experience thus painfully acquired. With individuals it is quite different; for by the time we grow tolerably wise by the aid of personal experience, we are old, and peradventure die, just as we have become qualified, in our own opinion, for the true enjoyment of existence. Life is a tune which has no *da capo*; and those who play it wrong at first sight, never have an opportunity of beginning it again

with the advantage of the lesson of their previous errors.

The disease at present prevailing more than all others, in our country, is that of *cutting teeth*; one of the earliest that seizes upon infants. It goes at present by the name of *speculation*, and, like other epidemics, seems to be in regular progress from one part of the United States to another. The symptoms of this disease are easily discernible. At first, that is to say, in the preparatory stage, the people of a city or town will go plodding on in the old, sober, money-making way, *peu a peu*, for some years, buying and selling a thing for what it happens to be worth at the time. At length some rare genius springs up, and, like an inspired Pythia in breeches, foretells that this city *must* be one of the greatest of the day. Then the diminutive present, like little Tom Thumb, is swallowed up by the great red cow of the future;—the inspiration spreads,—he who has nothing to lose sometimes gets rich, if he has discretion to sell out in time; and all get something, except the honest gentleman, who fares pretty much like the person in whose hand the fire goes out in the play of “Robin’s alive, as ’live as a bee.” The

poor man gets a pretty pile of debts on his back, and becomes the jest of his fellow play-mates, who got rid of the fire just before it went out.

I remember I happened to be in a certain great city, some ten or a dozen years ago, when the folks were just cutting their eye-teeth, and buying land as if every lot had a gold mine in it. Prices were then given, which have ever since impoverished the purchasers; which they have never been able to realize, and probably never will. There is a great difference in buying land on speculation, and purchasing it to derive a support from its produce. In the one case, the man depends altogether upon its prospective value, derives nothing from it in the intermediate space of time, and if he sells it for its first cost, still he is a loser to the amount of the interest of the purchase-money, and of the taxes. In the other case, admitting the man, at the end of twenty or fifty years, disposes of it for even less than he gave, still, if it has supported him in the meanwhile, it has been a good bargain. The good old way, therefore, of buying land for what it is, not what it possibly may be worth, is, I think, the

best, after all ; and of those who acted under a different idea, one possibly may have grown unreasonably rich, while fifty have become uncomfortably poor. This epidemic, I observe, in its progress, extends to every article of sale or purchase, and generally peoples several of those public infirmaries called county jails, before it is checked effectually. It is then generally passed over to the next city, where it operates precisely the same, without distinction of climate ; for it would seem that in this case, contrary to the usual practice, a man will take up with nobody's experience but his own, nor believe in the mischief until he becomes a victim : cupidity is ever excited by a solitary instance of successful speculation infinitely more strongly than discouraged by a hundred examples of victims sacrificed at the shrine of this golden calf.

The great northern cities having pretty well got through the cutting of their teeth, the disease seems now making a successful progress to the south. Washington, which seems to have been begotten in speculation, and brought up in it too, is just now cutting its wisdom teeth, and Richmond appears to me to be following its example.

London, Cairo, Pekin, Ispahan, and even the great Babylon, with its "*hieroglyphic bricks*," and "*Nimrod straw*," are, and were, nothing to what these two auspicious cities are one day to become; and prices are given for land by persons properly inoculated with the mania, which will cause their heirs to make wry faces, or I am mistaken. I know a little of these matters myself; for I was once, for my sins, advised by a knowing man who saw deep into millstones, to buy a lot in the neighbourhood of the certain great city I mentioned before, and which, though generally more than half covered with water, and producing nothing but bullfrogs, he assured me would double the purchase-money whenever the city came that way, which it evidently had a great inclination to do. But the city, "a murrain take her!" not being a Dutch city, and having no predilection for marshes or frogs, obstinately took a different direction, notwithstanding my friend had demonstrated to the contrary. My speculation still remains on my hands; it is now worth almost half what it cost, and that half has been paid in taxes for opening the neighbouring streets. Nay, its principal staple commodity of frogs is extinct in

consequence of the depredations of certain Frenchmen, who settled close by, on purpose—to hear the music.

That Richmond will increase rapidly in exact proportion to the increase of population and agriculture in the range of country watered by James River and its branches, I have no doubt. But I do doubt whether either the one or other will increase, at least for a very long time, in a way to realize the anticipations entertained by many people here. The Atlantic States seem to have had their day; and few of them, except such as possess a back territory equal, or nearly equal, in fertility and in natural advantages, to the Western States, and those which will from time to time grow out of the Mississippi and Missouri territories, will hereafter increase in a ratio corresponding with their previous growth. The more active and enterprising—the people who partake of youth, enterprise, and hardihood, and who increase the actual productions of the earth by their labours, are looking more and more to the West, “over the hills and far away.” It is in that direction the tide which knows no ebb, will continue to flow, till the great vacuum is filled up, when, possibly, a

reaction will take place, and people re-emigrate to the back-woods of the Atlantic coast. The prospect of exchanging a little exhausted farm, for one ten times as large, where the labours and privations of a few years are repaid by the sweets of independence to themselves and their children, will allure many of the young ones of the East, to the Land of Promise in the West.

The people of the United States partake, in no small degree, of the habits of their predecessors, the Aborigines, who, when they have exhausted one hunting-ground, pull up stakes, and incontinently march off to another, four or five hundred miles off, where game is plenty. So with honest brother Jonathan. When he has eaten up every thing around him, and worked his land to skin and bone, and when his house is just on the point of tumbling about his ears; instead of taking the trouble of restoring the one, or rebuilding the other, he abandons both; and packing up his moveables, consisting of his wife and chubby boys, in a wagon, whistles himself to the banks of the Ohio, the Illinois, or the Missouri,—all one to him. Here he builds him a log cabin,—and his axe is like the whirlwind, which levels the tallest

trees of the forest in a twinkling. By and by he puts an addition to his cabin; and last of all, builds him a stately house, and becomes a judge, a general, or a member of congress,—for our people are jacks of all trades, and the same man can turn his hand or his head to any thing.

It is easy to perceive the effects that will result and which in part have already resulted from this habit of emigration, for which our people are distinguished. The most hardy, active, industrious children of the elder States, who have little or no birthright at home,—who have sagacity to perceive the advantages, and courage to encounter the difficulties of so long a journey, go where the land is cheap, and labour repaid with abundance. Those who remain behind, will consist of a sober, regular race, forming a very useful ingredient in our mixed population; possessing perhaps more of the elegances, but less of the solid independence of life; and who will make as good citizens, but not as good soldiers, as the hardy emigrants to the *new countries*. They will increase, perhaps, the manufactures of the country; but probably the produce of the land, which is the consequence of well-directed industry, will not increase in

equal proportion, so long as there remains such a field for enterprise in the western world.

I think it results from this reasoning, that the sanguine calculations of the growth of our cities east of the Alleghanies, are ill founded in some degree, and that consequently speculations made in the spirit of this misguided second-sight, will end at last in disappointment to somebody. I don't say that the present purchasers will not be gainers; for it is easy to blow a bubble to a certain size. One buys of another as his imagination becomes inflated with the vapour of mighty gains, and on they scuffle, treading each other's heels, all pocketing a little, except honest Jack-come-last, who, as usual, pays the piper, and like the rear of a retreating army, sustains all the loss. He who makes the growth of our cities, for the last twenty years, the basis of his calculation for the next twenty, if I am not mistaken, will be severely disappointed. Their increase has been that of a young child, which grows more the first twenty years than all the rest of its life afterward. Neither our past experience, nor the example of other countries, has any material application to our future destiny. The race of this country is

like that of the swift *Heirie*, whose rider, as the Arabs say, if you inquire of him where he is going, is out of hearing before he can answer ; and, as respects other nations, the period of their existence, which affords any grounds of comparison with this young country, is too distant and obscure to offer either example or instruction sufficiently clear to form the ground-work either of speculation or calculation. In countries whose limits are circumscribed on all sides, either by the ocean, or by neighbouring territories, equally populous, the increasing numbers of the people are enabled to supply their wants by improving their lands, and modes of cultivation ;—by the erection of manufactures, and the fostering of new incitements to industry: consequently every foot of land in the space thus occupied, increases in its products, and consequently in its value, proportionably with the increase of population. But it is quite different in the States which are the best peopled among us. The increase of numbers, when it arrives at a certain point, is always followed by emigration, rather than by any exertions to support the increase by those improvements I stated; and of course, while there still remain fertile

and pleasant territories in the indefinable limits of the west to be settled, it will generally happen, that the growth of the elder States will be retarded, while that of the new is accelerated by emigrations. In Connecticut, and probably in nearly all the New-England States, I believe there has been little growth in numbers, since the western States became objects of attention, and offered safety, as well as competence. If the land, either in town or country, has risen in its nominal price, it has but little, if any, increased in value. The difference is owing, I imagine, almost entirely to speculation, and to the depreciation of money,—the consequence of enormous emissions of paper in all parts of the United States.

By and by, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Ohio, will be old States, increasing indeed in population, but by no means in comparison with their former ratio. They, in time, will become the parents of new States, far in the wilderness, and the current of emigration will continue to flow, till it reaches the shores of another Atlantic in the west. Old DANIEL BOON is still the file-leader. He was the first settler of Kentucky, which soon grew too populous for him; and by regular emigrations he

has reached the Missouri, which he is now following up to the Rocky Mountains. If he lives, he will, I have little doubt, get to the mouth of Columbia River, and there, perhaps, sit down, like another Alexander of Macedon, and weep because there are no more worlds to—*settle*.

This is a true travelling letter. I began at Richmond, and ended at the mouth of the Columbia River; a tolerable journey enough. In my next I will try to set you down somewhere nearer home, if possible;—perhaps on the top of the Blue Ridge, if I can get thus far. Good bye.

## LETTER VIII.

*DEAR FRANK,*

**MAY** be you have seen the contest of two rival ladies, of pretty nearly equal family, fortune, and pretensions, for the supreme dominion over a little country town—how they dressed, and fidgetted, what low courtesies, and sly, civil, disagreeable inquiries they made when they met, and how they always endeavoured to outstay each other at a tea-party, to have the last word, which, like the last blow, is decisive of victory. It is thus with our cities, little and great. New-York and Philadelphia, being incontestably at the head of the *ton*, are for ever disputing the palm of fashion, science, literature, fine arts, “and all that sort of thing.” One is better built—the other has the finest port; one has the most commerce—the other the most manufactures; one has its steeples—the other its

shot-towers ; one has its Hudson and East rivers —the other its Delaware and Schuylkill. When the Philadelphian is hard pushed, he boasts of his squares and his wide streets, his beef and his butter ; and when the New-Yorker is in the greatest extremity, he opens his *Battery* upon his antagonist, and demolishes him in a twinkling. Boston values itself on its town-meetings and Atheneum. Baltimore on its taste in music : and Charleston is proud of its races. Thus all have some straw to tickle themselves with, and the natives of each are astonished, when they meet, that any body should question their superiority.

Richmond and Norfolk are the belles of "Ould Virginia;" one being the beauty of the region of river alluvious, the other of the region of sea sand. This, of course, is a sufficient reason for a most vehement rivalry. Though, at the distance of nearly two hundred miles, they seem to consider the prosperity of one as interfering with that of the other, and consequently look with a jealous eye on every internal improvement in roads or canals, that is exclusively advantageous to either. They remind us of the good Dame Ashfield, in *Speed the Plough*, whose great rival in the village

was one Mrs. Grundy. Nothing happened to the former, that she did not exclaim, "I wonder what Mrs. Grundy will say to this?" until, at last, honest Farmer Ashfield gets out of patience, and exclaims, "Dom Mrs. Grundy, you're always dinging, dinging her in my ears."

This rivalry is not peculiar to your consequential cities, having a town-house, a corporation, constables, catchpoles, and such like dignitaries, but pervades all neighbouring little towns throughout the world. Indeed, the less they are, the more inveterate seems their jealousy. The smallest trifle sets them pulling caps, and nothing can produce the least unanimity, except the bone of contention being given to one in particular, when all the rest unite against the fortunate Mrs. Grundy, and pull her reputation all to pieces. In addition to this, every great town has a number of little ones attached to its interests, and taking its part, like some small German Prince in the quarrels of Europe. They put one in mind of a battle between two city mastiffs of distinction, when, you know, every little bobtail-crop-eared cur sallies forth to take sides, growling, showing his teeth, cocking his stamp tail bolt upright, and lifting his

leg at every post in the neighbourhood with great intrepidity. This diminutive jealousy of our neighbours, I believe, is not peculiar to any nation or age; it subsists every where, and at all times, but still it is not the less ridiculous for all that.

James river, on which Richmond lies, is navigable for ships to within a few miles of the city, where it is obstructed by a bar, beyond which only smaller vessels can pass. This is the reason why the people of Norfolk call the place "*Shallow Richmond*," as King Richard distinguishes his rival competitor. It is in contemplation to remove this bar, under the belief, that it was originally caused by a deposition of logs. If so, the project is feasible enough; but if it arises from any peculiarity in the natural current of the river, there will certainly be a bar at all times somewhere near this spot. From the junction of the Appomattox with James river up to Richmond, the latter stream pursues a course singularly winding, so that in one place you sail nearly in a circle for some miles. This is called the *Dutchman's gap*, a name which they explain by a story, which is peculiarly remarkable, as being the only instance, either in history or tradition,

*He lies. No town stand.  
as eminent.*

where a Dutchman outwitted any body. I would tell it you, but you would not comprehend it, without a description of the place, which I can't afford to give just now.

One thing struck me here as a peculiarity. It may be common, but I have not observed it before. The banks of this river, for upwards of forty miles, are, in every instance, singularly contrasted. If high on one side, it is low and flat on the other, and in no one instance did I see an exception to this rule ! It is not my business to explain these matters. Let the philosophers look to them, if, as is very possible, they have not explained them before. After the junction of the two streams, the river widens, and just here it is that the ship navigation properly ends, in coming up from the bay. The place is called *City-Point*, a *lucus a non lucendo*—there being no city, only every body wonders why one was not built there. Below this commence those extensive flats, where the early settlers first broke the soil of North America ; and where the first sun rose and set on the natives of the eastern hemisphere, pursuing the peaceful occupations of husbandry in this wilderness of the west. It is here then that we see

the spot where first was planted the seeds of this great country—mighty in its present vigorous youth, but far mightier in its future destinies. The place, therefore, is one of the most interesting to a reflecting mind (as mine is of course) of any in this country. To an American it is peculiarly interesting. You know I have been to Rome—seen all the ruins—and been besieged in that renowned city by at least ten thousand beggars. Then I have been up the Archipelago, where I saw several things that are not to be seen, as M. Chateaubriand did in the United States, Greece, and Jerusalem.\* Then I have been at Smyrna, where I never wish to go again, and seen the very spot where old Homer, as they affirm, kept a grammar-school. A strange place, there being not a single birch-tree in the whole neighbourhood! From thence we may infer, that “probably,” as the learned member of the Agricultural Society of Otaheite, &c. &c. &c. &c. &c. would say—that, *probably*, either Homer used the *ferula*, instead of a birchen twig—or that he did not approve of flagellation—or, lastly, that he

\* To wit: the flood-tide making in our lakes; the tomb of Leonidas, and Pontius Pilate’s palace.

never kept a school in this place. This last supposition is rendered more "probable," by the claim of the Island of Chios to the same honour; but every body knows, that islanders always have been, and always will be, the greatest braggarts in the world. But to return, I have travelled from Smyrna to Constantinople, in which progress I was almost bitten to death by fleas. Here, too, I encountered a Christian exile, who bore this testimony to the exuberance of Christian charity—"I have travelled among Savages, Pagans, Mussulmen, and whenever I entered their doors, they gave me all that my wants demanded, and felt the offer of remuneration as an insult—but when I come among Christians, I can get nothing without *money*." But he had never been in Virginia.

Yet, after having seen (in books) all these remains of ancient, or exhibitions of modern, magnificence, I can honestly say, that they excited nothing like the feeling I experienced, on visiting the spot where the first permanent settlement was made by the pilgrims, in this *our* western hemisphere. Nothing now remains, but the land they cultivated, and their graves; but the spot is well

known, and every century, while, like a river, it carries millions of light wonders to the ocean of oblivion, will only render it more interesting and illustrious. It is closely connected with the first links of a great chain of causes and effects, that have already changed the destiny of the *new*, and will probably change that of the *old* world. He, therefore, who cannot feel the inspiration of this spot, need not take the trouble to go to Rome or Athens, for he may rest assured, that the fine and subtile spirit which lives, and moves, and has its being, in the future and the past alone, is not an inmate of his mind.

But to return to the honest, humdrum, present time, which is almost as bad as jumping off a horse at full speed. The land in its present state, in the vicinity of James river, below Richmond, and indeed in the greater part of Lower Virginia, is greatly injured by being planted too often without its strength being sustained by manure. It reminds me of poor S——, who grew prematurely old, and turned his head into a pine barren, by cultivating his faculties overmuch. This was the reason why I never studied too hard, though, to

do myself justice, I used to batter that most infamous science, Algebra, until I was *plus* in stupidity, and *minus* in every thing else.

The reason why the land in this part of the country is so generally impoverished, is, probably, the great number of slaves, who enable the owner to plant a greater portion of his land every year. The temptation of immediate profit is too strong to overcome the anticipation of future want. The present and the future are, indeed, always at war with each other; and, it is not yet quite certain, whether, in a worldly view, the votaries of one or other are the most wise. With this wise observation, I bid you good bye.

Your's always.



## LETTER IX.

*DEAR FRANK,*

**ADVANCING** into the country in the direction we were advised to follow, we crossed the Pamunkey, a branch of York River, which, flowing through a clay soil, is generally so muddy, that if Narcissus had made it his looking-glass, he never had died for love. The Indians who inhabited the western shores of Chesapeake Bay, seem to have had a singular predilection for the letter P, in giving names to the rivers. We have the Petapsco, Patuxent, Potomac, Piankatank, Powhatan,\* Pamaunck,† Pamunky, and doubtless divers others, whose names have been altered by the Europeans. For it is to be recollected that the first settlers of an Indian country not only take away

\* Now James River.

† Now York River.

from the copper-coloured villains their lands and rivers, but give them new names, like the gipsies, who first steal children, and then, to disguise the theft, christen them anew.

Beyond the Pamunky the country begins gradually to assume a more irregular appearance, and becomes diversified with hills and valleys. At first the soil is principally of clay, but as you proceed, it becomes gravelly for a space; and in approaching the Blue Ridge, again changes to a reddish clay. Much of the two first divisions of soil has never, I believe, been fertile, and certainly is not so now; but the last is considered fruitful. In riding along the road, we saw very few comfortable looking houses. The better sort of people here, having little taste for highways, prefer building at a distance from them,—to get away from the dust, perhaps. Most of the houses on the public roads are taverns, and none of the best, although by no means desperate. In consequence of this, it results that no correct idea of Virginia can be formed by travelling on the great highways; and travellers, unless they deviate from them, will be much deceived, not only in their estimate of the soil, but of the houses.

I don't know if you recollect our knowing acquaintance, the London cockney traveller, who cut such a dash in your city last winter, and whose professed object in coming out to this country was, to give a correct account of it to his countrymen when he got home again. He had monopolized all the knowledge extant about England,—was a profound critic in cheese, porter, and roast beef,—and contradicted historians, travellers, and official documents,—without ceremony. He never saw a beggar in England in his life—denied tithes, poor-rates, and taxes, and always bought his poultry cheaper than in the cheapest parts of our country. He was *omnia suspendens naso*,—and could not see more than a hundred yards with the aid of a glass he wore suspended from his neck by a black ribbon. You may remember how we were tickled with the idea of his travelling to the southward and westward, to see the country. He was hereabouts not long ago, and mistook a cluster of haystacks for a town, which doubtless he will describe as being a very mean place, with thatched roofs shaped like steeples; without paint, and not better than Irish cabins. The last we heard of him was his getting nearly

drowned, by driving his gig plump into a little clay-coloured branch of James River, which he mistook for a turnpike road. I should like to read his travels, for no doubt he will make ample amends for what he could not see, by describing what was not to be seen.

The first view we got of the mountains was from a hill a few miles from Louisa court-house. You know I was *raised*, as they say in Virginia, among the mountains of the North, and I never see one that it does not conjure up a hundred pleasing associations. It was one of those evenings described by a homespun poet, who, I believe, few people ever heard of before, when,

\* The purple hue of evening fell,  
 " Upon the low sequester'd dell,  
 " And scarce a ling'ring sunbeam play'd,  
 " Around the distant mountain's head.  
 " The sweet south wind broke to a calm,  
 " The dews of evening fell like balm.  
 " The night-hawk, soaring in the sky,  
 " Told that the shades of night were nigh.  
 " The bat began his dusky flight;  
 " The Whip-poor-will, *our* bird of night,  
 " Ever unseen, yet ever near,  
 " His shrill note warbled in the ear;

" The buzzing beetle forth did his  
 " With busy hum, and heedless eye;  
 " The little watchman of the night—  
 " The firefly, trimm'd his lamp so bright,  
 " And took his merry airy round,  
 " Along the meadow's fragrant bound ;  
 " Where blossom'd clover, bath'd in dew,  
 " In sweet luxuriance blushing grew," &c.

It was just such an evening when we first caught a view of the distant undulating mountain, whose fading blue outline could hardly be distinguished from the blue sky with which it almost seemed to mingle. Between us and the mountain was spread a wide landscape,—shade softening into shade, with such imperceptible gradations, as blended the whole into an indescribable harmony. Over all was spread that rich purple hue, which painters have often attempted to imitate in vain. All that they have been able to do is, to put us in mind of it, and leave the rest to imagination.—This is a good hint to me, and so I will say no more at present about the mountains.

At Louisa I bought a new horse,—one of your capital *racking* ponies, as they are yclept, who wriggled and twisted at such an execrable rate, that by the time we got to Charlottesville I felt

as if I had been racked in good earnest. The great philosopher, Nimrod Babylonicus Brickibus, used to say very wisely, that "when a man was altogether taken up with himself, he was very apt to attend to nothing else,"—which is as true as that the fresh-water lakes were once salt; for I remember nothing of the ride from Louisa to Charlottesville, except that Oliver's horse stumbled in fording a branch of James River, at the Western foot of the South mountain, and spilled him into the arms of the Nymph of the stream. "Our armies swore terribly in Flanders," as Uncle Toby says,—but they were nothing to Noll, who abused the river, instead of his horse, in such a way that if the river-gods had been in power, he would have fared rather badly. But as he escaped with only a wet jacket, I do suppose our republican rivers threw off the yoke of the river-gods, when they became independent. I will not describe Charlottesville, because we arrived there at night, half asleep,—and left at half awake in the morning.

I fear you will think we shall never get on to the Blue Ridge,—where I believe I promised to land you, safe and sound, in this letter. But I

will fulfil my promise, happen what may. I can do this without forfeiting my character as "a regular built" traveller, whose duty it is to tell all he sees, and more besides,—since the only remarkable incident that occurred on the road was a stout battle between a magnanimous pig and a large mastiff, in which the pig utterly discomfited the mastiff, and incontinently carried off the enemy's artillery, consisting of a hollow marrow bone. This is the only fight we have yet seen in Virginia, and therefore I thought it worth recording.

We ascended the Blue Ridge at Rockfish Gap, by a winding road, rising so gently as to be almost imperceptible; nor should we have known the height to which we had arrived, had it not been for the gradual expansion of the prospect, which at last became so extensive and magnificent, that I would describe it, if I thought I could communicate any thing of the impression I received. This I hope you will take as a sufficient reason for my declining the task. Nearly on the summit, a little descending to the West, stands an extensive tavern and boarding-house, where we halted for the night; and where I advise you to stop, if you ever travel this way. The air is delightfully

pure, elastic, and invigorating ;—a spring of the finest water in the world (except the waters of Helicon) bubbles from a rock of freestone close by ;—the house is exceedingly comfortable ; and the prospect of the long valley to the West, as it gradually faded, and melted, and became lost in the shades of night, was calculated to awaken the soul,—which so often falls fast asleep in the racket of noisy towns.

Nobody ever died here except the late landlord, who fell a victim to a disease which is occasionally epidemical in some parts, called the *whiskey fever*. Good bye.

## LETTER X.

*DEAR FRANK,*

**WE** rose in the morning, bright and early, to descend the mountain, "all in the merry month" of June, the sweetest month of all the year, notwithstanding what our poets sing about May. This *may* be a very pleasant month in Italy or Greece, but commend me to something a little warmer than our May, which deals too much in north-east storms, to be quite to my taste. Were I a first-rate poet, that is to say, a lord or a Scotsman, I would certainly pluck the crown of flowers from the head of May, to place it on the sunny brow of June, there to bloom in the midst of genial gales and fostering sunbeams.

In descending the mountain, we had a view, which, not being common even here, and entirely unknown among you, citizens, deserves at least

an attempt to sketch it. We saw, what seemed a vast and interminable waste of waters, spreading far and wide, and covering the whole face of the lower world. The vapours of the night had settled in the wide valley, at the foot of the hill, and enveloped it in one unbroken sheet of mist, that in the grey obscurity of the morning, looked like a boundless ocean. But as the sun rose, a gentle breeze sprung up, and the vapours began to be in motion. As they lifted themselves lazily from the ground, and rolled in closer masses towards the mountains, the face of nature gradually disclosed itself in all its varied and enchanting beauty. The imaginary sea became a fertile valley, extending up and down, as far as the eye could reach. In the midst of the green foliage of oaks and solemn pines, were seen rich cultivated lands, and comfortable farm-houses, surrounded by ruddy fields of clover, speckled with groups of cattle grazing in its luxuriant pastures, or reposing quietly among its blossoms. Still, as the mists passed silently away, new objects disclosed themselves, with a sweet delay, that enhanced their beauty. Here was seen a little town, and near it a field, animated with sturdy labourers. In one place

two little rivers, after winding and coquetting through the meadows, sometimes approaching, sometimes receding, sometimes hid, and sometimes seen, joined their currents, and finally disappeared in the distant woods, beyond which a high peaked cliff, towering above the ascending vapours, glittered in the beams of the morning sun, like a giant capt with helmet of burnished gold. It seemed as if a new and blooming world was gradually emerging from chaos, and assuming the most beautiful arrangement, under the hand of some invisible agent cradled in the mists of the morning.

It seldom falls to the lot of city mortals to see such a scene—and it is seldom, I am told, that it falls to the lot of a traveller to behold it more than once. The impression it made I have since recalled with new delight. I hope to retain the remembrance for a long time, and when at last it fades away in the succession of new scenes, new objects, new enjoyments, and new sufferings, I shall think I have lost a cherished relic of past times. I asked Oliver if he thought any of the learned geologists could make such a beautiful

world? He answered me not—but broke out into a classical quotation, which he forgot to pervert as usual, and which he translated or paraphrased at my request, as follows:

Fair flowers now deck the rural field,  
The trees in youthful bloom appear;  
The groves an ample foliage yield,  
And beauteous is the ripening year.

At the foot of the mountain we quitted the direct road, and deviated eighteen miles to the left, in order to visit a famous cave on the bank of the Shenandoah. We now entered on the limestone country, one of the most verdant, fruitful, and picturesque regions of the United States. The fields are greener, and the people that cultivate them are white men, whose labours being voluntary, seem to make the landscape smile. They are, a majority of them at least, laborious Dutchmen, <sup>X</sup> who have gradually rolled down these valleys from their northern extremes, to the frontiers of Georgia. You see but few slaves, and every thing is the more gay for not being darkened by them—at least to my eyes. Here too, the rivers which, east of the mountain, are muddy and tur-

<sup>X</sup>  
Germans. There is but one  
element of them S. of V. - 21  
lem, N. C.

bid, become pure and transparent as the fount of Parnassus, out of which poets drink—because they can get nothing stronger.

The mountain called the Blue Ridge, not only forms the natural but the political division of Virginia. I know not whether you have observed it, but all the considerable States, to the south of New-York inclusive, have two little scurvy, distinct, and separate local interests, or rather local feelings, operating most vehemently, in a kind of undertone not much heard abroad, but, like certain domestic accents, exceedingly potent at home. The east and west sections of these States are continually at sixes and sevens, and as the west is generally the most extensive, as well as fruitful, it is gradually getting the upper hand of the other, and removing the seat of power farther into the interior. These distinctions, so far as I have been able to trace them, originated in the struggles of little village politicians striving to become popular, by affecting to be the guardians of the village rights, which they defend most manfully, long before they are attacked. Their wise constituents in time begin to perceive very

clearly, that they have been very much imposed upon, and in fact made slaves of, by a few people in a distant corner of the state—and then nothing will do but a convention, to set matters right, and put things topsy-turvy.

This snug little rivalry is beginning to bud vigorously in Virginia. The people of whom I am now writing, call those east of the mountain *Tuckahoes*, and their country Old Virginia. They themselves are the *Cokees*, and their country New Virginia. The origin of these Indian phrases, I am not able to trace. I understand, however, that in parts of Virginia, east of the Blue Ridge, there is a species of large mushroom growing under ground, and known by the name of Tuckahoe. It may be, that as this part of Virginia was settled while the Indians inhabited the great valley, west of the Blue Ridge, they might have stigmatized the white settlers as Tuckahoes—mushrooms, in allusion to their being upstarts—new comers. If it were only a matter of six or eight hundred years ago, I might go near to prove, that the first settlers were arrant *Troglodytes*, and were called by the Indians Tuckahoe, because, like that

notable fungus, they grew under ground. But this, among other matters, I leave to the future antiquarian.

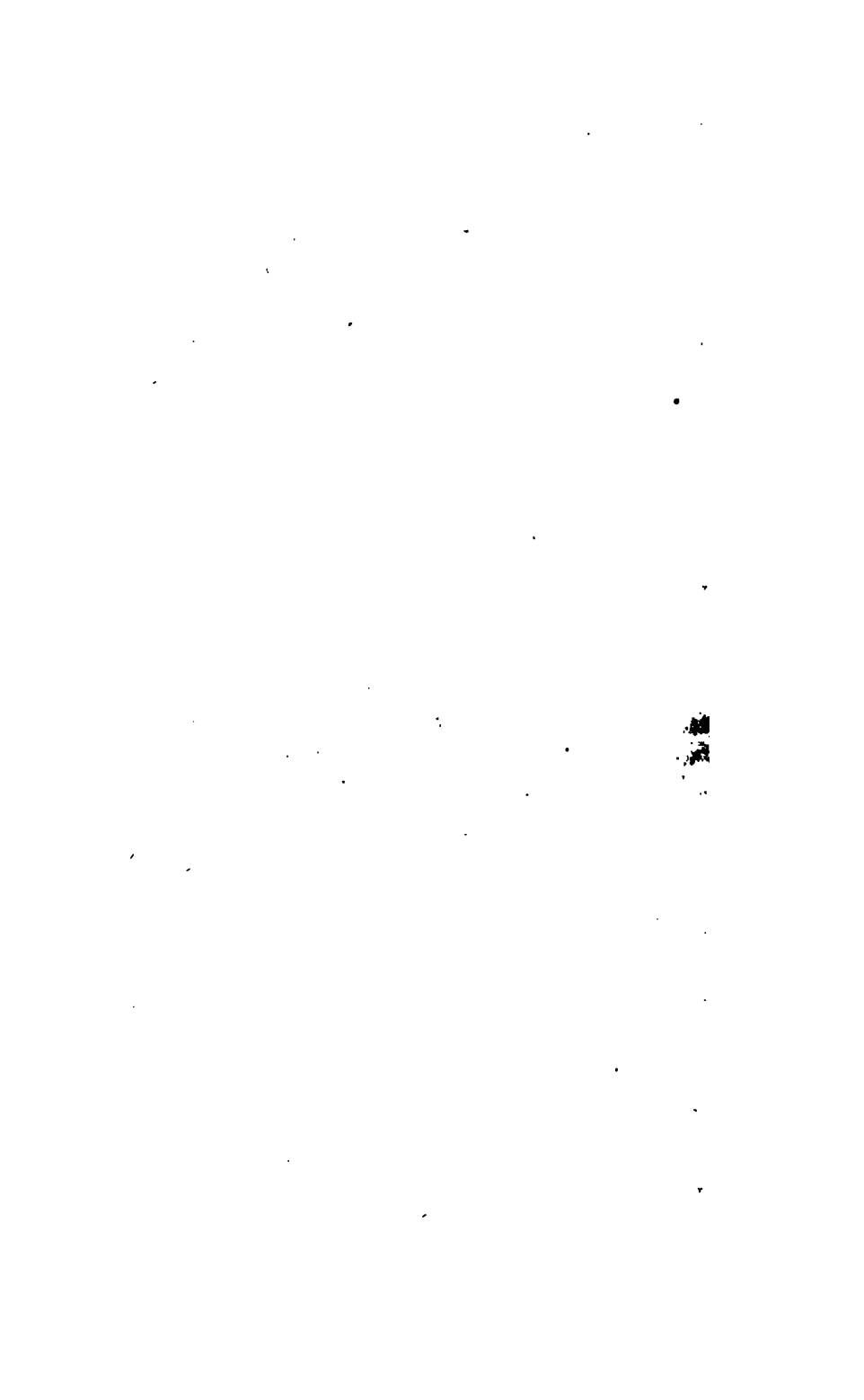
Certain it is, that however these names may have originated, they are now the familiar terms by which the people of Old and New Virginia are designated east of the Blue Ridge. It is the old story of Mrs. Farmer Ashfield and Mrs. Planter Grundy. Mrs. Ashfield, who leads the ton among the *Cohees*, squints at Mrs. Grundy, the fine lady of the Tuckahoes, because forsooth, and marry come up, my lady gives herself airs, and wears such mighty fine clothes, when she goes to the Springs. Now Goody Ashfield, for her part, don't care for fine things, not she ; but then she can't bear to see some people take upon themselves, and pretend to be better or more genteel than other people. Then Madam Grundy, if the truth must be told, is sometimes apt to turn up her nose, when she sees plain Mrs. Ashfield industriously mending a pair of breeches, the original colour of which is lost in the obscurity of patches. She *wonders* at her daughter pulling flax, or weaving, or turning a great spinning-wheel that deranges people's nerves sadly. *Wonders*,

in a very kind and friendly way, why Farmer Ashfield can think of making such a slave of his daughter, and why, as he can afford it, he don't send her to one of the great boarding-schools in Philadelphia, to get a polish, and learn to despise her vulgar old father and mother. All these wonderments are, of course, wormwood to Mrs. Ashfield, who thereupon pulls Mrs. Grundy to pieces, when she goes away.

As to Squire Grundy and Farmer Ashfield, they have certain snug matters of dispute to themselves. The Farmer insists upon it, at town-meetings and elections, that the Squire enjoys greater political privileges than he does; that the country of Tuckahoe has more representatives in the legislature than it ought to have; that all Squire Grundy's negroes go to the polls, and vote; that the seat of government ought to be removed, that the poor enslaved Cohees may not be *toted* all the way to Richmond to hear orations, and get justice; and that, finally, the Squire gives himself such airs of superiority, that there is no such thing as getting along with him. On the other hand, Squire Grundy maintains that he pays more taxes than the Farmer; that taxation and represent-

ation as naturally go together as whiskey and vagabonds; that not numbers but property ought to be represented; that his negroes are included in the number of voters because they are taxed; and that, finally, the Cohees, not being able to comprehend all this, are a set of ignorant blockheads. The Farmer says, "It is a dom lie;" and both parties are more convinced than before. The end of all this will be, that the Cohees will probably at last carry their point, and, in consequence thereof, be just as well off as they were before.

I wish you would overcome your *vis inertia*, and write to me, addressed to ———, where I shall be on my return. I long to hear how Mrs. Kate makes head against the spots on the sun, which have frightened several women hereabouts into the spotted fever. The learned, I see, are hard at work about them, and ransacking the Encyclopedia famously. I wish 'em well. Of all people I know of, they are the most disinterested, for two-thirds of their time, at least, they not only labour without any reward, but without doing any good—which is very good in them. Good bye.



## LETTER XI.

DEAR FRANK,

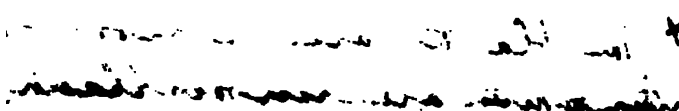
THE blacks<sup>x</sup> form a distinguishing feature in the Lowlands of the South; but diminish in numbers as you travel towards the mountains. They are of a great variety of shades,—from jet black to almost white.<sup>x</sup> Indeed I have seen some of them who were still kept in bondage, whose complexions were rather lighter than their masters. I was much puzzled to account for these apparent caprices of nature in bestowing such singular varieties of complexion; but I soon found that she had good reasons to justify her.

The Negroes are in general a harmless race, although they are more apt than their masters to transgress the laws, because a great many things which are lawful to white men, are forbidden to the blacks. Being, in general, more ignorant than

*The blacks are almost all  
the white are almost black*

the whites of the poorer classes, they are of course more given to petty vices, and are, perhaps, not so honest. They seldom, however, commit any capital crime, except in revenge for a long series of execrable tyranny practised by some unfeeling brute of an owner, or overseer. They seem, indeed, a gay, harmless, and unthinking race; for those who are likely to have few agreeable subjects for their thoughts, Providence seems kindly to divest, in some degree, of the capacity to reflect long on any thing. They are by far the most musical of any portion of the inhabitants of the United States, and in the evening I have seen them reclining in their boats on the canal at Richmond, playing on the *banjo*, and singing in a style—I dare say, equal to a Venetian Gondolier. Then they whistle as clear as the notes of the fife;—and their laugh is the very echo of thoughtless hilarity.

How would it mortify the pride of the white man, and humble his lordly sense of superiority, if it were indeed found, that these poor fellows were happier than those who affect to pity their miseries. And yet it is possible,—and, from my soul, I hope it is so; for then I should be relieved



from certain doubts about the equal distributions of Providence, that confound me not a little. They certainly are exempt from many of the cares that beset their masters,—and instead of being in bondage to the future, and slaves to their offspring, have every assurance, that the sons of their old masters will be the masters of their sons, and keep them, at least, from want. Then they dance with a glee to which the vivacity of French peasants is nothing; and indeed enjoy, with a much keener zest than we, all those pleasures that spring from thoughtlessness of the past, and carelessness of the future. Their intervals of leisure are precious; for to those who labour hard, idleness is perfect enjoyment; and to swing upon a gate all day, is a luxury of which people who have nothing to do can form no conception. After all, indeed, the great distinction between the very idle and the very laborious, is, that the first lack leisure and luxuries,—the last, appetite and employment. Don't mistake, and suppose that I am the advocate of slavery; for I hate it: and wish most sincerely and ardently, that there was not a man in our country that could stand up, and with his black finger

point to the preamble of our constitution, which declares—all men are born free and equal—and swear it was not true. But yet I am gratified when I can persuade myself, that a race of men which is found in this situation in almost every Christian land, is not without some little enjoyments, that sweeten the bitter draught of slavery, and prevent its being all gall.

Until they can be freed, without endangering the community, infringing the established rights of property, and rendering themselves even more wretched, it is some comfort to see them well treated by their masters. And wo, wo to the man who adds one feather to the weight they are destined to bear. He shall assuredly meet the vengeance of the Being who is all mercy to the weak and the ignorant,—all justice to the wise and the strong. Wo to those, who, tempted by avarice, or impelled by vengeance, shall divide the parent from its offspring, and sell them apart in distant lands! A cruel and inhuman act;—for it is seldom we see the ties of kindred or of conjugal affection, stronger than in the poor negro. He will travel twelve, fifteen, or twenty miles, to see his wife and children, after his daily

labour is over, and return in the morning to his labour again. If he obtains his liberty, he will often devote the first years of his liberty to buying their freedom;—thus setting an example of conjugal and parental affection, which the white man may indeed admire; but, it is feared, would seldom imitate.

I am led into these reflections by a rencontre we had yesterday, with a caitiff who was on one of those expeditions to buy slaves for the southern market. At one of the taverns along the road, we were set down in the same room with an elderly man, and a youth who seemed to be well acquainted with him; for they conversed familiarly, and with true republican independence—for they did not mind who heard them. From the tenor of his conversation, I was induced to look particularly at the elder, who was an ill-looking, hard-featured, pock-marked, black-bearded fellow, whom a jury would have hanged upon very doubtful evidence.

He was telling the youth something like the following detested tale:—He was going, it seems, to Richmond, to inquire about a draft for seven

thousand dollars, which he had sent by mail, but which, not having been acknowledged by his correspondent, he was afraid had been stolen, and the money received by the thief. 'I should not like to lose it,' says he, 'for I worked hard for it, and sold many a poor d——l of a blacky to Carolina and Georgia to scrape it together.' He then went on to tell many a black perfidious tale, which I tried to forget, and threw them from my memory as the stomach does poisons. All along the road, it seems, he made it his business to inquire where lived a man who might perhaps be tempted to become a party in this accursed traffic; and when he had got some half a dozen of these poor creatures, he tied their hands behind their backs, and drove them three or four hundred miles, or more, bare-headed, and half naked, through the burning southern sun. Fearful that even southern humanity would revolt at such an exhibition of human misery, and human barbarity, he gave out that they were runaway slaves he was carrying home to their masters. On one occasion a poor black woman exposed this fallacy, and told the story of her being kidnapped; and

when he got her into a wood out of hearing, he beat her, to use his own expression, "till her back was white."

I would not tell such tales, except that chance may bring them to the ears of magistrates who will enforce the laws, if any there be, against this inhuman trade,—or if there be none, that the legislatures may be induced to wipe away this foul stain. There was a singular mixture of guilty hardihood, and affected sanctity, about this *animal*,—for he could not be a man. It seems he married all the men and women he bought, himself, because they would sell better for being man and wife! Once,—he told it with high glee,—he sold a negro who was almost blind "to a *parson*," these were his very words, "for eight hundred dollars." Returning that way some time after, the *parson* (can it be possible?) accused him of cheating him, by selling him a fellow who could'nt see half a yard, after sun-down. "I denied it stoutly," continued this fine fellow,—“the parson insisted; and at last I bought the fellow back again for fifty dollars less than I sold him for. When the bargain was concluded,—Pomp, said I,—go and water my horse. Pomp pretended he

could not see,—for it was then dusk:—but I took a good cudgel, and laid on till the fellow saw as plain as daylight, and did what he was bid as well as any body could have done it. There, said I, you see the fellow is no more blind than you or I. The parson wanted to get him back: so I sold him again for eight hundred dollars, and made fifty by the speculation.”

“But,” said the youth, “were you not afraid in travelling through the wild country, and sleeping in lone houses, these slaves would rise and kill you.” “To be sure I was,” said the other, “but I always fastened my door, put a chair on a table before it, so that it might wake me in falling, and slept with a loaded pistol in each hand. It was a bad life; and I left it off *as soon as I could live without it*: for many is the time I have separated wives from husbands, and husbands from wives, and parents from children; but then I made them amends by marrying them again as soon as I had a chance. That is to say, I made them call each other man and wife, and sleep together,—which is quite enough for negroes. I made one bad purchase, though,” continued he,—“I bought a young mulatto girl, a

likely creature,—a great bargain. She had been the favourite of her master, who had lately married. The difficulty was, to get her to go ; for the poor creature loved her master. However, I swore most bitterly I was only going to take her to her mother at ———, and she went with me ; though she seemed to doubt me very much. But when she discovered at last that we were out of the State, I thought she would go mad ; and, in fact, the next night, drowned herself in the river close by. I lost a good five hundred dollars by this foolish trick, and began to think seriously of quitting this business ; which I did soon after, and set up a shop. But though I lie to every body, somehow or other, I don't get on very well ; and sometimes think of returning to my old trade again."

Oliver and I had intended to sleep at this place, but the confession of this abominable caitiff determined us to rid ourselves of his society, for fear the house would fall, or earth open and swallow us up for being in such company. So we left the house, praying that Providence, in pity to a miserable race, would either permit the caitiff

*Leit*

to prosper in his present business, or graciously cause him to be speedily hanged. In justice to our own country I ought to mention this caitiff was not a native of the United States: had he been, I would have suppressed this story,—for such a monster is sufficient to disgrace a whole nation.

I ought to have mentioned, that the negroes of Maryland and Virginia, for some reason or other, have an invincible repugnance to being sold to the southward. Whether this repugnance arises from an idea that they will be treated with more severity, or is only the natural dislike every human being, except our fashionable ladies, feels to going to live in a strange land, far from all association with early scenes, and first-born attachments, I cannot tell. I know not that these poor souls are worse treated in Carolina and Georgia, nor have I any reason to believe so; certain it is, however, that they discover an unwillingness amounting almost to horror, at the idea of being sold there; and have a simple song which they sometimes, as I am told, sing with a mournful melancholy cadence, as they row along the rivers, in remembrance of home. It is merely the language of nature:

*impartial!*

Going away to Georgia, ho, heave, O!

Massa sell poor negro, ho, heave, O!

Leave poor wife and children, ho, heave, O! &c. &c.

The negroes have a great number of songs, of their own composition, and founded on various little domestic incidents; particularly the death of their masters and mistresses, who, if they have been kind to them, are remembered in their homely strains, some of which sound very affectingly, but would probably make no great figure on paper. I have heard that in some instances they go to their graves, and invoke their spirits to interpose, if they are treated ill, or threatened to be sold at a distance. There is something of the true pathetic in all this, were these people not negroes. This spoils all; for we have got such an inveterate habit of divesting them of all the best attributes of humanity, in order to justify our oppressions, that the idea of connecting feeling or sentiment with a slave, actually makes us laugh. I have read, that after the death of the famous Alphonso Albuquerque, called the Conqueror of India, it was long the practice of the natives, when they were oppressed, to go to his grave, and call upon his gallant spirit to arise and

be again their protector. Such things touch the innermost heart, when told of Indians ; but black sentiment, feeling, or gratitude, is not of the real fashionable colour.

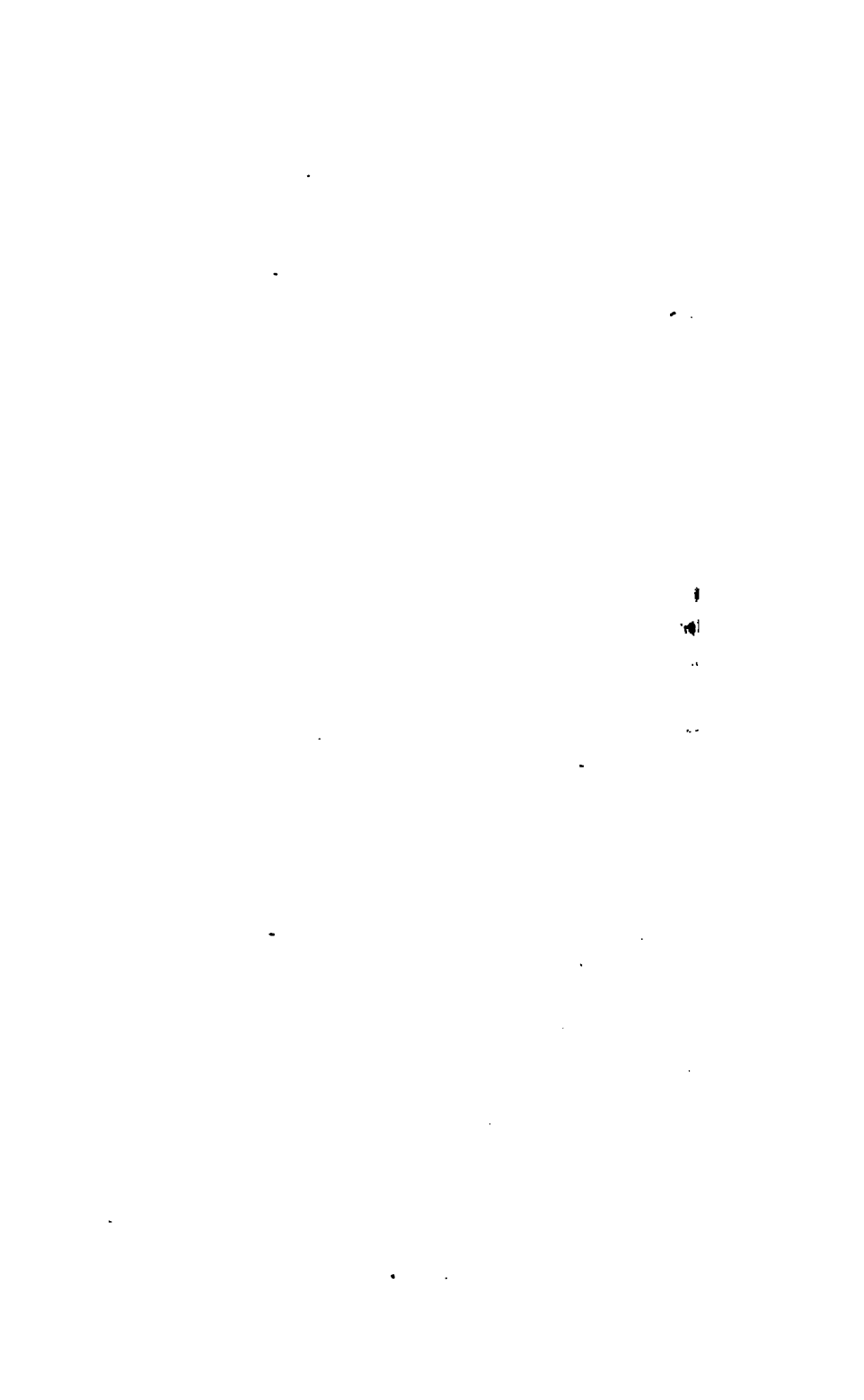
Jogging along from the house where we left the caitiff, who will one day, I fear, bring down some great calamity on the country of his birth, it was our fate to meet with another example of the tricks men will play before high Heaven, when not only custom, but the laws, sanction oppression. The sun was shining out very hot,—and in turning an angle of the road, we encountered the following group: First, a little cart, drawn by one horse, in which five or six half naked black children were tumbled, like pigs, together. The cart had no covering—and they seemed to have been actually broiled to sleep. Behind the cart marched three black women, with head, neck, and breasts uncovered, and without shoes or stockings: next came three men, bare-headed, half naked, and chained together with an ox-chain. Last of all came a white man,—a white man! Frank,—on horseback, carrying pistols in his belt, and who, as we passed him, had the impudence to look us in the face without blushing. I should

like to have seen him hunted by bloodhounds. At a house where we stopped a little further on, we learned, that he had bought these miserable beings in Maryland, and was marching them in this manner to some one of the more southern States. Shame on the State of Maryland! I say, —and shame on the State of Virginia!—and every State through which this wretched cavalcade was permitted to pass! Do they expect that such exhibitions will not dishonour them in the eyes of strangers, however they may be reconciled to them by education and habit?

As to their owning slaves, that is not their fault, because it was a system ready made to their hands, and they cannot get rid of it. As to their buying and selling them, that arises out of the system, perhaps, and cannot be avoided. It is easy for people who have no slaves to talk about emancipation, as it is easy to be benevolent at the expense of others. I therefore pay little attention to the sneers uttered against the slave-holders of the south, for not emancipating their slaves. I neither join in the clamour, or think the worse of them for their misfortunes. But I do say, that

when they permit such flagrant and indecent outrages on humanity as that I have just described;—when they sanction a villain in thus marching half naked women, and men loaded with chains, without being charged with any crime but that of being black, from one section of the United States to another, hundreds of miles, in the face of day,—then they disgrace themselves, and the country to which they belong. Such things are not necessary. If they must be transported, in this inhuman and indecent manner,—let it be in the night-time, and when there is no moon or stars.—Let not the blessed sun see it,—or the traveller carry the news to distant countries. I know that these instances occur but rarely; for I saw only this one. But one is enough to cover a country with eternal shame. Never would I disclose such things of my country, except in the hope of preventing their ever happening more. I am satisfied that these things need only to be pointed out to the attention of legislators and magistrates, in their naked depravity, to produce a speedy and effectual remedy for this indecent and inhuman practice. It is conformable to the

spirit of true friendship to tell of faults where there is any hope of amendment; and I love the people of the south sufficiently well to try to wipe away this one stain, by one day pointing it out to their notice, as I most assuredly will, if I live. Farewell.



## LETTER XII.

DEAR FRANK,

I HAVE now plenty of leisure of evenings; for Diver has lately buried himself in Monsieur Cuvier's Golgotha, where he appears to be making a mighty shaking among the dry bones. It will probably not be long before he comes out upon me, with a head full of fossils, bones, and petrifications, philosophizing upon them, as Hamlet moralizes upon poor Yorick's skull. In pursuing these studies he generally leaves me to myself, and my amusement is then to write you just what is uppermost. You must therefore forgive me, if I write without connexion, and sometimes put you out of patience.

If I remember right, I left off my last somewhere about the foot of the Blue Ridge. After this our ride lay along the banks of the Shenan-

doah, which commences its course northwardly, close by where some of the branches of James river begin their course to the south. They divide the waters of this great valley between them, and bear them through the Blue Ridge, the first in conjunction with the Potomac, the latter by itself. It was a pleasant ride along the foot of the mountain, sometimes crossing the little river, at others trotting on its banks, skirted with lofty elms. To the right was the mountain, to the left the far-spreading valley, spotted with fine farms, and bounded in the west by another ridge of blue hills.

In the days of classical romance or Gothic superstition, when every grove, and stream, and lonely hill was peopled by nymphs, river-gods, dryads, fairies, and other queer curmudgeons, some of them of tolerable reputation, and others no better than they should be, this fair pastoral region would have been all alive with these small people. But, in this age of stern philosophy, the spritely gambols of imagination are repressed by the trammels of science, and these airy creations of fear or fancy chased from their wonted haunts by cross old fellows, who explore the country to

look for stones and minerals. The rivers produce nothing but fish; the groves are only peopled with squirrels and woodpeckers; and the mountains contain no beings allied to poetry or romance, but the wild deer, and the huntsman equally wild.

The only objects of sight or hearing, that recall to mind the sweet fables of yore, are the tall poplar trees about some of the farm-houses, and the answering echoes of the hunter's gun or stage-driver's tin trumpet. The poplars remind us of the sisters of Phaeton (a great tandem gentleman in ancient times, who burnt the people of Africa all black by driving the chariot of the sun too close to the poor caitiffs.)—These were stiff, upright, slender tabbies, I'll be bound, and were changed into poplars on the banks of the Po, for enticing Diana at a tea-party. The echoes recall to mind the existence of that good-natured nymph who, like a parish clerk, repeats all she hears, and says amen to every thing—an example of complaisance worthy the special imitation of the whole sex. I wanted Oliver to be a little romantic here, to keep me in countenance, but he has a sovereign contempt for poetic fic-

tions, preferring those of the philosophers, which he affirms display more imagination than those of all the poets put together. When I talked to him of the transformation of the ladies on the banks of the Po, he only answered "Poh!"—for which I am resolved to make a great shaking among his dry bones, whenever he untombs them. For me—I delight in keeping up a good fellowship with all the airy, fantastic, and indefinite beings of former times. They are to me pleasant sort of people; every beautiful spot of nature derives additional interest from being associated with them; and in the dearth of real sources of pleasure, I am willing to cherish as many imaginary ones as I can. Sage moralists, and men of pious name, tell us that even the happiness of this world is all imaginary. Shall we then discard sources of enjoyment, because they are not real? It is said, that the people of the United States are less tinctured with superstition of every kind than any other nation. They have discarded, it is true, the nymphs, the fairies, and the witches, but many of them believe in those delectable little tracts to be found in taverns and steam-boats, in which children are converted at four years old, and

special interpositions of Providence are quoted to supply Lorenzo Dow with a pair of breeches, or Dorothy Ripley with a clue to find her bundle !

Whatever may be the imaginary, the greater portion of the real denizens of this part of the country are mere matter-of-fact Germans ; four square, solid, and deliberative smokers, as e'er put pipe in mouth, or carried a tin tobacco-box. They are of the genuine useful class of people, who make two dozen ruddy blades of clover grow where never a one grew before—who save all they make—work harder and harder, the richer they grow ; speak well of the government, except when the taxing-man pays a visit, and pay their trifle of assessment with as bad a grace as any people you will see in a summer's day. It is singular, what a difference there is between these and the Tuckahoe. The latter is a gallant, high-spirited, lofty, lazy sort of being, much more likely to spend money than earn it, and who, however he may consume, is not very likely to add much to the fruits of the earth. People are very apt to judge of themselves by a comparison with others, and the Tuckahoe, feeling himself so greatly superior to his slaves, is inclined to hold

every body else equally his inferior. This sense of imaginary superiority is the parent of high qualities, and prevents the possessor very often from indulging mean and contemptible propensities. Pride, indeed, is a great preserver of human virtue, which is often so weak as to require the support of some prop less pure than itself. Hence it is, that the pride of family, and the sense of superiority, when properly directed, are the parents of high heroic characteristics, just as when improperly directed they are used as licenses for every species of debauchery, and justifications for every breach of morality and decorum. To minds properly constituted, the reputation of a father is a spur to excellence, a conservator of virtue; but to petty intellects, it is a mere diploma of folly and impertinence. The last think, because they were hatched in the eagle's nest, they must, of necessity, be young eagles, whether they take their lofty flight in the regions of the stars, or wallow in puddles with geese and swine.

The Tuckahoe of the better sort is a gallant, generous person, who is much better qualified to defend his country in time of war, than to enrich it in a period of peace. He is like a singed cat,

and very often takes as much pains to appear worse than he is, as some people among us do to appear better. In short, the Tuckahoe belongs to a class of beings, among whom, in times of great danger, when the existence of a people is at stake, will be found the men who will be most likely to save or sink with their country. Manual industry seldom produces great men, and it is not often that the best citizens make the bravest soldiers.

But Mynheer Van Schimmelpenninck, or Vander Schlegel, he is the man of saving grace—that is, he saves something every day, and considers he has lost a day when he has not saved a penny. He has few or no slaves, and those he has work with him, side by side, in the fields. This creates a sort of good fellowship between them, that the people of the other side of the mountain would consider degrading; for the familiarity of a Tuckahoe with his slave begins pretty much where it ends in our part of the world. In general, however, these people, like our farmers, cultivate their own grounds with their own hands, and consequently a large family is one of their greatest blessings. Aware of this, the good *yffrow* bestirs herself

manfully night and day, and in a few years a race of lusty *bushwhackers* rewards the labours of the industrious pair. The boys work in the fields when they grow up, and the girls do the housework. Now and then a young Daniel Boon, smitten with the ruddy regions towards the setting sun, *starts* for the western country, and founds a new race of Vander Schlegels, or Van Schimmelpennincks. In general, however, they are not much given to change, except as led along step by step, by the course of the valley. When people set out to go any where in this country, it is called *starting*. Thus they start to the westward—for the people of this country are the most active in the world, and do every thing by a start. Other people *set out*, as they term it, and will pause and ponder, and ponder and pause half a life, over a journey of twenty miles—while an American decides at once, on going from the Province of Maine to the banks of the Missouri. We are young quails, and run from the nest with the eggshell on our back.

In almost every part of the United States where I have chanced to be, except among the Dutch, the Germans, and the Quakers, people

m to build every thing *ex tempore* and *propore*, as if they looked forward to a speedy royal, or did not expect to want it long. No-  
are else, it seems to me, do people work more  
the present, less for the future, or live so com-  
ally up to the extent of their means. If we  
ld houses, they are generally of wood, and  
dly calculated to outlast the builder. If we  
ot trees, they are generally Lombardy poplars,  
t spring up of a sudden, give no more shade  
i a broom stuck on end, and grow old with their  
sters. Still, however, I believe all this has a  
tary and quickening influence on the character  
he people, because it offers another spur to  
vity, stimulating it not only by the hope of  
, but the necessity of exertion to remedy  
ing inconveniences. Thus the young heir,  
ead of stepping into the possession of a house  
pletely finished, and replete with every con-  
ience—an estate requiring no labour or exer-  
to repair its delapidations, finds it absolutely  
essary to bestir himself to complete what his  
estor had only begun, and thus is relieved from  
tedium and temptations of idleness.

But you can always tell when you get among the Dutch and the Quakers, for there you perceive that something has been done for posterity. Their houses are of stone, and built for duration, not for show. If a German builds a house, its walls are twice as thick as others—if he puts down a gate-post, it is sure to be nearly as thick as it is long. Every thing about him, animate and inanimate, partakes in this character of solidity. His wife is even a jolly, portly dame—his children chubby rogues, with legs shaped like little old-fashioned mahogany bannisters—his barns as big as fortresses—his horses like mammoths—his cattle enormous—and his breeches surprisingly redundant in linseywoolsey. It matters not to him, whether the form of sideboards or bureaux changes, or whether other people wear tight breeches or Cossac pantaloons in the shape of meal-bags. Let fashion change as it may, his low, round crowned, broad brimmed hat keeps its ground—his galligaskins support the same liberal dimensions, and his old oaken chest and clothespress of curled maple, with the Anno Domini of their construction upon them, together with the

dresser glistening with pewter plates, still stand their ground, while the baseless fabrics of fashion fade away, without leaving a wreck behind. Ceaseless and unwearied industry is his delight, and enterprise and speculation his abhorrence. Riches do not corrupt, nor poverty depress him ; for his mind is a sort of Pacific ocean, such as the first navigators described it—unmoved by tempests, and only intolerable from its dead and tedious calms. Thus he moves on, and when he dies, his son moves on in the same pace, till generations have passed away, without one of the name becoming distinguished by his exploits or his crimes.

These are useful citizens—for they bless a country with useful works, and add to its riches. But still, though industry, sobriety, and economy, are useful habits, they are selfish after all, and can hardly aspire to the dignity of virtues, except as they are preservatives against active vices. Industry is a good citizen, but a bad soldier ; and, in the present state of the world, every country requires brave defenders. People, whose minds are ever intent on the cultivation of the earth and the lucre of gain—on whom no motive operates to

spur them to the pursuit of knowledge, or of glory, however they may contribute to the wealth of a state, will add little, I apprehend, to its physical strength in time of invasion. They will stipulate for security of persons and property, and be content to change masters. They will contribute largely to the actual wants, but will seldom, if ever, do much to adorn and embellish a nation. They are eminently useful—they deserve our respect, because they constitute the solid capitalists of the nation ; but they require others to defend this wealth when the danger comes, and ought not to look down with contempt on those who are not so laborious, but more brave and enterprising than themselves. These, by their active qualities, by their intellectual exertions, give a character of splendour and dignity, without which, indeed, a nation may become rich, but can never be either free or admired long. The one may be compared to the rough, solid, and unostentatious material which constitutes the foundation of the edifice ; the other to the superstructure, where all the grace and beauty is displayed to the eyes of the beholder. Without the one the building could not stand—without the other it would nei-

ther afford shelter, or excite admiration. Let them love each other therefore, since they are parts of one harmonious whole, and tolerate those differences, which are essential to the cement of that society of which they are equally useful constituent portions.

We stopt to breakfast at one of those Traveller's Rests, common in this part of the world, where they receive pay for a sort of family fare provided for strangers. The house was built of square pine logs, lapping over at the four corners, the interstices filled up with little blocks of wood, plastered over, and whitewashed very neatly. Before the establishment of sawmills it was cheaper and less laborious to build in this manner than to bring boards from a great distance. When new, these houses are very comfortable, but as the plaster falls out the spaces afford shrewd harbours for bugs, as I sometimes found to my cost. Every thing about this house was in a style of comfort and easy competency. The ladies got breakfast for us, and presided at the meal. They were a mother and daughter; the former a jolly, comfortable, middle-aged dame—looking like a special “breeder of sinners”—and the latter a

neat-looking little girl, whom the mother called out of a small log-house, where she was weaving. A loom is an appendage to almost every farmhouse in this district of country—and the daughters generally officiate as weavers. The daughters of the Tuckahoes are all young ladies; those of the Cohees only girls. After breakfast, being in no hurry, we chatted with these good women, who were full of simplicity as well as curiosity. As we treated them with decent homespun courtesy, which all feel and understand, we soon got well acquainted.

In the course of the conversation, the little girl complained that she was not only obliged to weave for the whole family, but to milk the cows, churn the butter—pull the flax—and sometimes, when rain was looked for, to help make hay. “I want father to buy a black woman,” said she—“but he says they are more trouble than they are worth, so I suppose there is no help for it, and I must keep on working till I am tired to death. The Tuckahoes never pull flax, for I was over the mountain the other day, and they told me so.” The good woman could not resist the desire of showing off her daughter’s accomplishments—it

was her only daughter—and what mother could resist? She carried us into the best room, which is always kept dark to keep out the flies, and was literally festooned with short gowns and petticoats hanging all round. These, I suppose, constituted the little girl's fortune, and certainly constituted a very respectable dower, in chintz and striped linseywoolsey. The mother here displayed, with eyes that would have sparkled if they could, a little basket made with bristles by her daughter, which was very ingenious and very pretty; and if it had not been either, we would have praised it—for foul befall the churl who would check the honest feelings of an honest mother. Over the mantelpiece of this room was a fowlingpiece and the broad antlers of a deer, the trophy of the youngest son, a lad of sixteen.

We left this place, and went on towards Weir's Cave. In bidding good bye, the honest dame told us she hoped we would return that way again. This is the frontier line of country politeness, and assures one of a welcome. Good bye.



### LETTER XIII.

*DEAR FRANK,*

**NATURE** or education, or that mysterious influence, whatever it may be, which inclines the human mind to certain pursuits, and fits it to derive enjoyment from the contemplation of particular objects, has made me a great admirer of mountain scenery. Whether it be the silence and solitude, that reign in these lofty regions, which naturally calls the imagination into action, or the magnitude of the objects every where presenting themselves to the eye; or the vivifying elasticity of the air we breathe, that, separate or combined, produce, in me, the sensation of elevated pleasure, I neither know, nor do I much care. Let philosophers analyze their feelings, while I content myself with feeling, without philosophizing. You, I know, have never been among the mountains;

for I remember your father, the worthy alderman, had an idea there was nothing worth seeing out of the great cities. He sent you from one to the other, with store of money and recommendations, to see mankind, without being aware that the politer sort of people in cities, are, like mould candles, all of a size and shape, and taking the same number to the pound. He thought the whole world could be seen at the coffee-house.

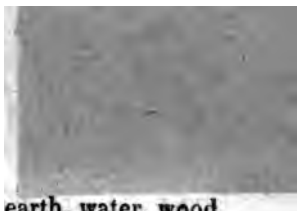
For this reason, and because I delight to recall and arrange the impressions I derived from the scene, I will sketch a mountain landscape for you, without caring so much to administer to your gratification as to my own. I am now in the very midst of that great congregation of hills, comprising all the spurs, branches, knobs, and peaks, of the great chain which has been called with a happy aptitude, the backbone of America. From the window where I am now writing, I can see them running into each other, as when we lock our fingers together, exhibiting an infinitude of various outlines; some waving, others rising in peaks, and others straight for many miles. Every where they are covered from top to bottom with every various shade of green foliage; except that here and there

a bare rocky promontory is seen, crowned at its summit with pines. As the clouds pass over, an infinite succession of light and shadow is produced, that occasions a perpetual variety in the combinations of scenery. The sides of many of the ridges are, at intervals, ribbed with forests of pine, the deep foliage of which fringes the rocky projections from the foot to the summit, broad at the bottom, and ending in a point. Between these projecting ribs, in the deep glens, is seen a motley host of forest trees, all green, but all different in proportion as they are exposed to the sun, or enveloped in the shade. In some places appear extensive patches of deep red or brown, where the trees have been set on fire, either by accident, or with a view to turn the side of the hill into pasture. It may perhaps be owing to this practice, that one of the favourite Virginia reels is, 'Fire in the mountains, run, boys, run.'

In traversing this mountain region, one of the first things that struck me was the solemn, severe silence which prevailed every where, and only broken, at distant intervals, by the note of the cock of the woods; the chirping of a ground squirrel; the crash of a falling tree; or the long

echoes of the fowler's gun, which render the silence, thus broken in upon for a moment, still more striking. But if it should happen that a gust of wind comes on, the scene of repose is instantly changed into one of sublime and appalling noise and motion. The forest roars, the trees totter, and the limbs crack, in a way that is calculated to alarm the stoutest city tourist. You can hear it coming at a distance, roaring like far-off thunder, and warning the traveller to get into some clear spot, out of the reach of the falling trees. I did not see a tree actually fall; but in many places we were obliged to turn out of the road to avoid the trunks of immense oaks and pines, that had been blown down just before. Our good mothers think only of the perils of the sea; and give up a son for lost who becomes a sailor. But the perils of the land are far greater than those of the water; for there, whether in crowded cities or lonely mountains, it is the fate of man ever to be exposed to dangers, which often he cannot see, and often he cannot avoid.

Yet, though the ingredients of mountain scenes are pretty much the same, wherever we go, there is a continued variety occurring in the combina-



tion of the same materials of earth, water, wood, and rocks, that never tires. The prospect is always expanding or contracting: as you lose sight of one object on one side, another gradually opens in a different direction; and this continual change is the parent of endless diversity. From the mountains, whence you can see as far almost as the eye can extend, you descend into little narrow glens, hemmed in, on either side, by lofty bluffs, above which you catch the clouds passing, like shadows, no sooner seen than lost. Through these glens invariably winds a brook, or river, stealing or rushing from side to side,—striking first the foot of one mountain, and rebounding back to the other in regular meanders. The sides of these are sometimes skirted with narrow strips of meadow; and when this is the case, you may be pretty certain somebody lives near. The traces of impetuous torrents, now dry, or only displaying here and there a pool of clear water among the rocks, occur frequently, and sometimes form the road over which you travel. Little is seen of the traces of man, except the tracks of the road, or occasionally a column of smoke rising at a distance, which gives token of his being near, but



which not seldom turns out to proceed from the unextinguished fire of a west country waggoner, who has, perhaps, encamped there the night before, or stopped to cook his supper.

Of living objects, we sometimes saw a covey of partridges, a cock of the woods, or a ground squirrel. Their tameness convinced us they were little acquainted with man, whose acquaintance, instead of ripening into familiarity, produces nothing but fear. Occasionally we saw a litter of swine, half wild, which always snorted violently, and scampered into the woods as we approached; which convinced me they had some knowledge of our race, else they would not have been so frightened. In some few instances we came suddenly upon a brace of wood-cutters, with a couple of hounds, which were employed in scouring the forest, while their masters were felling trees. In the solemn repose of the woods we could hear the echoings of every stroke of their axes at a great distance. They sometimes condescended to stop a moment to look at us; but often continued their work without deigning us that attention; for there is a pride in these people that prevents them from doing strangers the honour to gaze at them, as



our fashionable well-bred people do. It sometimes happened that we found it expedient to inquire of them our way, when they always answered very civilly, and with much intelligence. In many places the only traces of human agency are the incisions of the sugar maple, and the little troughs at the foot of the tree turned upside down, to wait the flowing of the sap in the spring. Where these trees are plenty in the mountains, a family will sometimes build a hut, and remain till the season of sap is over, to make sugar, which they do by simply boiling the sap in a common kettle. When the sap flows no longer, they return home. It is in this mountainous region that the Great and Little Bull, Cow, and Calf Pasture rivers, and indeed almost all the streams rise, that find a common centre in James River; whose various veins pervade almost one half of Virginia.

To one accustomed, so many years as I have been, to the racket of noisy towns, and to the bustle of business, of which I partook in no part of the profits, and consequently felt no interest; who basked in no shades but the shady side of the street, and only remembered at long distance the deep repose of nature, even the novelty of

this scenery was delightful. To every being not bereft entirely of his soul's regalia, I should think it might afford a pure and salutary enjoyment. If he looks round, he will see many objects he has never seen before, or perceive the absence of many with which he has been familiar. If he be one of those to whom objects of sense are only springs to awaken the higher powers of the mind, he will feel and think as he has never done before. He will be led into reflections that, if they do not awaken his mind to the comprehension of new truths, will most likely open new and purer sources of pleasure, and more lofty subjects of contemplation. Activity and noise remind us only of this world: but silence and repose lead us to a world to come. Farewell.

## LETTER XIV.



DEAR FRANK,

**AFTER** riding a few hours from the honest Dutchman's I mentioned in my last, we came to *Weir's*, or *Wier's* Cave. It is near the river Shenandoah, which sweeps along close by the foot of the abrupt hill of limestone in which is the cave. The little town of Port Republic is within a couple of miles of this place. The proprietor of the cave is a Dutchman, and acts as Cicerone to the visitors, who are attracted hither in the summer season in considerable numbers.

The entrance is on the east side of an abrupt hill, and within about a hundred yards of Madison's cave, which last has now ceased to be visited, in consequence of the superior beauty of Weir's. Before we set out to begin our subterranean tour, we equipped ourselves in a couple of old coats,

which suit all sizes equally well, being made after a most accommodating fashion,—too short for tall people—too long for short ones,—but wide enough to fit any body. Oliver's was very much out at the elbows, and so long that, baiting its waist, it looked not unlike the fashionable walking surtouts of the present day, that are almost as convenient as petticoats.

The opening of the cave is so low, that we were obliged to crawl on hands and feet, which is no easy matter, with a candle in one hand. However, we followed our conductor's heels, obeying his directions, to take care of our heads here,—and mind our feet there. It is quite impossible to convey, by writing, any distinct or adequate idea of the beautiful variety of this silent, damp, and splendid subterranean scene. Every apartment is distinguished by stalactites of different forms, colours, and arrangements. In some, the roofs are studded with an infinitude of knobs, white as alabaster,—in others they are of a yellow cast,—and in others, the sides are encrusted with what conveys a perfect representation of yellow damask hangings, folded and festooned as regularly as in a drawingroom. In others, the sides

and roofs are either wholly or in part sprinkled with a profusion of little sparkling gems, that glitter like diamonds, and give an indispensible splendour to the apartment. In one of the rooms is a petrification which exhibits an exact representation of a fall of water of about twelve or fifteen feet, and which, I am satisfied, was once a real cascade. I could not help laughing in my sleeve, when I saw it, to think how the poor nymph of the stream must have been astonished to find herself gradually turning, like Niobe, to stone.

Far into the earth, and nearly nine hundred yards from the entrance, is a grand vaulted chamber, ninety yards in length, and an arched ceiling so high that we could just distinguish it by the light of our candles, which by this time began to burn blue. In the centre of this chamber, and entirely distinct from the walls, stands a snow-white pyramid, about fifteen feet high, which, viewed through the distance, and in the vague light, had most singularly the air and outline of a colossal statue in Roman robes. The delusion in first entering the apartment is complete; and as the figure stands thus awfully alone, in the centre of the earth, out of the reach of the busy hum of

life, as well as of the roaring thunder, and the sprightly beams of the blessed sun,—it might pass for some pagan divinity chisselled a thousand years ago. But it is consecrated to a nobler spirit;—the room is called Washington's, and the column I have endeavoured to describe is known by the name of Washington's statue.

The honest Dutchman has given names to every room, and every remarkable object, which he repeats with great self-complacency, but not in the very best of English.—“Now dish I call Solomon's temple.”—“Dish I call Solomon's trone.”—“Dish I call Niagara falls.”—And “dish Lady Washington's parlour.” He seemed to take great credit to himself for the aptitude of these names; and some of them were not altogether misplaced. After penetrating the cave about nine hundred yards, we turned to find our way again to the regions of the living. Honest Cicerone wanted to show us something else; but we had become excessively chilly, and fancied we began to breathe with less freedom than usual. To say the truth, I, for my part, was heartily fatigued with creeping and dodging about, among the damp and slippery rocks. The temperature of the air with-

out was that of summer, while that of the cave is uniformly, I think, about forty-five degrees, and withal excessively humid. In fact, whoever explores it pays the full price of whatever gratification he may derive from remembering its beauties. I would especially dissuade all fashionable ladies from venturing into it, for they would display their ancles most certainly; a thing which, judging by the present mode of dressing, they are particularly desirous to avoid!

When at the last we emerged from this subterranean wonder, I felt, I dare say, pretty much as did the pious Æneas when he left the shades. I have been sunning myself ever since, and yet have not recovered my usual temperature. Sometime hence I shall recall this adventure with pleasure, and dwell with complacency on the beauties of Wier's cave, when its damps and difficulties are forgotten. Many things not pleasant in the present, are delightful in the past tense. Memory often deceives us as much in recalling the past, as hope does in anticipating the future. They are both great deceivers; but then they are agreeable cheats: while the present time, with all its blunt honesty, is often a very disagreeable sort of a com-

panion. Oliver, who was in great hopes to gain some additional insight into the fashionable art of making worlds, by diving thus into the secrets of the earth, and expected at least to find a petrified reptile of some kind or other, came out in very much of an ill humour. He observed, in a grumbling sort of way, that "the outside of the earth was, like the outside of a pretty woman, the best part of her; and he who looked further, generally got his labour for his pains."

Being fatigued with our subterranean excursion, we agreed to remain all night with honest Cicerone, who keeps quite a comfortable house; from whence, in the stillness of the evening, you can hear the Shenandoah murmuring its way among the rocks. As we sat here in the evening, talking over the past, and anticipating the future,—sometimes admiring what we had seen below ground, and then turning to the last rays of the sun as they rested on the summit of the mountain—by and by certain strapping fellows came up, one after another, followed by fox-hounds, and quietly took their seats where they found them vacant. They began to talk about matters and things in general, and at last fell into stories of killing snakes, and

hunting deer in the mountains. Some of these were wonderfully romantic, and, no doubt, somewhat highly coloured; for people are very prone to be a little poetical, when they tell of what happens when nobody is present that can contradict them.

But mine host the Dutchman double distanced them all in a snake story,—from whence I concluded he was what is called a double Dutchman,—that is, a Dutchman paternal and maternal. It took him at least three quarters of an hour; for, like a true story-teller, he made the most of it, being doubtless the best story he had to his back. The snake was as *tick* as his *tigh*, and ran after him, bellowing just like a calf of six months old—and *den* he came close up behind him,—and *den*, you may depend, he was scared;—but *den*, for all *dat*, he turned round upon the snake *wid* his rifle, and fired right in his face, and kilt him, you may depend. Every body wondered at this story, and believed it, as in duty bound,—for he was their landlord, who kept the key of the whiskey, and was of course a person of consequence. About nine o'clock the club of story-tellers broke up, and quietly went their ways as civilly as they came.

Not one of them offered to fight us for a mint julep; nor did they insinuate any thing against gentlemen giving themselves such airs; for we treated them civilly: and in whatever part of this country I have been, I have always found I got what I gave. Our people scan the deportment of those who are better dressed than themselves with a deal of attention, and quickly detect any airs they may give themselves. If the stranger is inclined to treat them as if their coats were as good as his, they will fight for him, if necessary; but it will sometimes go hard with him if he takes even such freedoms with them as they would quietly receive from their equals. Bullying, or airs of superiority, will do nothing but irritate our people, who are sufficiently acquainted with the world to know that a man's claims to importance are exactly in an inverse ratio to his pretensions; and possess sufficient of the spirit of manly freedom to treat the insolence of a fine coat and an equipage with more severity than that of a beggar. The difference between the people of a free state, and those of a despotic government, seems to be, that the former display their spirit by *bristling* up at those above, and stooping to those below; while

the latter demonstrate their want of it by cringing to the rich, and trampling on the poor. The former will keep the middle of the road when a coach is coming, but will share it with a cart,—while the latter will drive into a ditch to get out of the way of an equipage, and make themselves amends by running over the first beggar they meet. Despotic states are fine places for rich people to travel through ;—but then free ones are the refuge, and the paradise, of those who have no claims to distinction, except what they derive from their Maker. Good bye.



## LETTER XV.

*DEAR FRANK,*

WE are now at the Warm Spring, feeding most sumptuously on venison and mutton, and passing our time in an agreeable variety of eating, drinking, and sleeping—sleeping, eating, and drinking—and drinking, eating, and sleeping. The spring is in the bottom of a little valley, shut in by high mountains, and looking like the abode of the Sylvan gods, the Oreades, and all the flat-footed nymphs of the mountains. The bath here is the most luxurious of any in the world; its temperature about that of the body, its purity almost equal to that of the circumambient air: and the fixed air plays against the skin, in a manner that tickles the fancy wonderfully. About five miles further on, are springs of still higher temperature, being from one hundred and two to one hundred

and eight degrees. They are resorted to by people who have tried the warm spring in vain, for rheumatic and other complaints.

Oliver has already discovered, to a positive certainty, that this valley has been neither more nor less than the crater of a volcano; which is doubtless the reason why the waters of it are so warm. He has picked up several substances, that have evidently undergone the action of fire, whether from a volcano, some neighbouring forge, or lime-kiln, I leave it to my masters, the philosophers, to discuss. For my part, I wish them success, in their praiseworthy attempts to find out how the world was made; for as *knowledge is power*, we shall then doubtless have several new worlds created by these wise people, free from all the faults and deficiencies of the old one. I am sure if a volcano, or a comet, is necessary to enable them to come at the truth, I am the last man in the world to deny them a trifling matter of this sort. A carpenter requires axes, saws, hammers, and chissels, for building a house; and certainly a philosopher is entitled to tools corresponding to the prodigious magnitude of his undertaking. If they wanted fifty volcanoes, and a

hundred comets, they might have them and welcome for all me ; provided the volcanoes were fairly burnt out, and the comets would pledge their word of honour not to return till the time foretold by Newton.

The warm spring is principally used as a bath, although people occasionally drink ; and cattle are, in a little time, very fond of it. Indeed, the instinct of animals has led us to some of the best remedies in the world ; and I understand all the salt licks, and many of the medicinal springs, in the western country, were originally indicated by the concourse of animals to those places. I drank of this water, but it created an unpleasant sensation of fulness in my head and eyes. The bath is about thirty feet in diameter, forming an octagon, walled two or three feet above the water's edge ; the bottom covered with pebbles, and the water so pure, that if it were only deeper, a man's head would turn in looking down into it.

I shall keep my remarks on the amusements, or rather want of amusements, modes of killing time, and habits of living at this place, until I have seen the other springs, which I purpose to visit ; when

I will *lump* them all together, and much good may they do you, my honest friend. All I shall tell you at present is, that I killed a rattlesnake this morning, and despoiled him of fourteen rattles, which I shall keep as trophies. These fellows are by no means common; though they tell stories of places in the mountains, where nobody but hunters ever go, where there are thousands. They are formidable dogs; and certainly, bating their being serpents, are pretty decent animals; for they never retreat, are never the first to attack, and always give the enemy fair notice before they commence the war. You know it is fair to give even the d—l his due; and why not a rattlesnake, which always puts one in mind of him?

I hear all the dogs of the establishment in an uproar, and have no doubt but Oliver's pet is at his old tricks.

## LETTER XVI.

*DEAR FRANK,*

**MY** last letter\* came to an untimely end, for reasons I therein gave, and which I hope proved satisfactory. I was always of opinion, that a man that had nothing to say, had better say nothing; and that when he has written himself out, he had better lay up the stump of his pen, and make verses to it, as Cid Hamet Benengeli did, when he had finished the renowned History of Don Quixotte de la Mancha. I hope these opinions are to your liking; but if they are not, it is all the same to me; for I am one of those people, whose opinions are settled the more firmly, like sand-bars, by the opposition of the currents.

We left the Warm Springs for divers good reasons. First, the venison began to run short:—

\* Omitted.—Ed.

Secondly, there were no pretty ladies ; and Oliver cannot live without them—and, thirdly, we were tired ; for there is a desperate monotony in all watering-places, that I should suppose would render them intolerable to every body, except invalids and bachelors, who don't know when they are well off, and want to get married—young ladies in the *qui vive*—and married people tired of home and happiness. For my part, I think a man who goes to a watering-place to get a wife, deserves to be—married ; a folly which, as Sir Peter Teazel says, ‘ always brings with it its own punishment.’ I must, however, do the people of Virginia the justice to say, that they have better reasons for visiting the springs than most folks, since they do it to avoid the climate of the low country, which, in the months of August and September, is often unhealthy.

We left the Warm Spring late in the afternoon, intending to sleep at the Hot Springs, about five miles distant, but were not able to procure lodgings as we expected. We therefore pushed on for a house about ten miles off, where we were told we might be accommodated. It was sunset, in the depth of these valleys, when we passed the

Hot Springs; and, long before we got to the place of destination, night overtook us. But it was bright moonlight, and we jogged on without difficulty, between two high mountains, approaching close to each other, and only separated by a narrow verdant bottom, through which a little brook meandered quietly along. The scene was worth a description; but, as we were both tired and hungry, you must excuse my being particular.

After 'travelling, and travelling, and travelling,' as the story-books say, we came at last to a stately two story house, which we could see by the moonlight, was magnificently bedecked with old petticoats stuck in the window panes. It stood on an eminence, by the road side, at the foot of which ran a little brawling river, whose murmuring we had heard at a distance. We alighted and knocked at the door of this castle of desolation; when out came, not a dwarf, but a giant at least seven feet high. He took our horses, and we went into the house, where the rest of this family of giants, seven in number, were seated round a table loaded with a mighty supper of bread, meat, and vegetables, not forgetting the bacon. Two women, of the like enormous stature, were waiting

on the gentlemen. Hereupon, at sight of this most picturesque group, all the stories I had ever read of people being killed, wounded, and thrown into a ditch, in traversing lonely heaths, or desert mountains, rushed upon my memory. I fully determined to look at the sheets to see if they were not bloody, before I went to bed, and gazed round the room with infinite solicitude. At each recess of the fireplace was a bed ; and the rest of the furniture, though carelessly arranged, was decent and comfortable enough ; but I did not like the looks of three or four rifles, displayed rather ostentatiously over the chimney.

The group round the table consisted of an old man, whose countenance, to say the honest truth, was not quite so amiable as one might see of a summer's day—and six young fellows, that looked as if the forest itself would bow before them—if they were only armed with axes. These are the lads to go in front of the great caravan of man, in his progress to the west—to clear the lands, to hunt the deer, to war against the wild beasts, and cope with the savage, equally wild. But, as I said, my head was full of robbers, and I listened to their talk with great interest. It turned upon the day's

work they had just gone through, and of the task of the morrow, when they were going to reap a field of oats—and at once all apprehensions subsided. The industrious farmer, even in the wildest recesses of the mountains, is ever a harmless, honest being, with whom the lonely stranger may eat, and drink, and sleep in safety. The hope of gain is, with him, but a gentle impulse, which leads to the violation of no law, the commission of no crime—to attain the object. The dews, the showers, and the sunshine of heaven, are the sources of his prosperity; and thus is he ever led to a feeling of dependence on the bounties of Providence, by his interest being more closely connected with those operations of nature, which lead us directly to a contemplation of the Deity. No wonder, then, that the cultivators of the land are those who constitute the real wholesome strength and virtue of every civilized country; since they daily look to the heavens and to the earth alone for their support—and consequently feel their dependence on the one, and their inseparable connexion with the other.

I slept without even dreaming of robbers; and, in the morning, we got up before sunrise, having

fourteen miles to ride to breakfast. The country through which we were now passing, is very near the summit of the great ridge of mountains which divides the waters that run to the east from those that run to the west. We were now, consequently, on the highest land between the Atlantic and the Mississippi. At Dennis Callaghan's, where we breakfasted, there is a little stream which joins James river, and eventually mingles with the ocean, and a few miles beyond there is a similar one which is tributary to the Mississippi. Here, then, resides the mighty river-god of the Alleghanies, who carries an urn under each arm, from one of which he pours the waters of the east, from the other those of the west. My mind expanded as it floated rapidly like a light canoe down the rivers, one moment dwelling on the vast ocean, and then on that endless river, whose innumerable tributary streams, like veins and arteries, there find their common centre, in the heart of that great valley, forming natural links, and bonds of common union, which will for ever remind the people of that vast region of their kindred blood and kindred interests. I wanted Oliver to sympathize with me in these notable

cogitations; but he had somehow or other heard of a parcel of oyster or muscle shells, bedded in a rock somewhere in this neighbourhood, which made his hobby-horse to caper, and curvet, and kick at such a rate, that he could attend to nothing else. I wish to heaven these shells had staid where they belonged to, and not got into situations to puzzle the philosophers as they do.

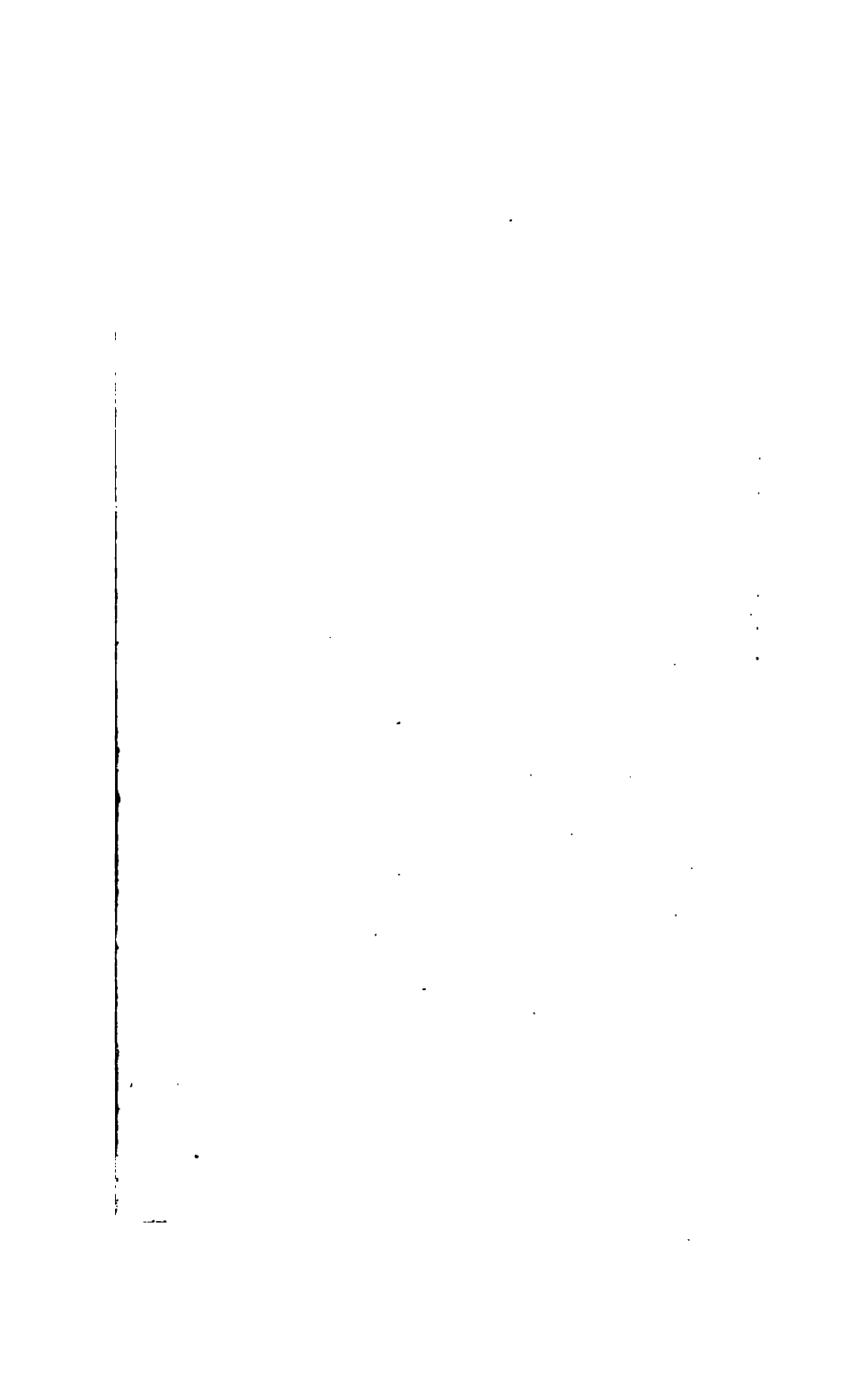
But I must not forget honest little Dennis Callaghan, who is neither muscleman, nor oyster-man; and at any rate would much rather have the inside of an oyster than its shell, I'll swear for him. Dennis is a sort of old man of the mountain, as well known in these parts as Dennis Bulgruddery was on Muckslush Heath. He is an Irishman, honey, true blue, pluck, liver and lights, midriff, and all; and settled in this place about the time the oystershells did, I believe, for the memory of man runneth not to the contrary of his being here. How he got here, the Lord only knows; but here he is, and here he is likely to remain, and flourish, for no traveller passes *his* door without calling; either because it is the only

house of entertainment for many miles, or because Dennis is a most petulant wag, and withal a very honest fellow, which, for a publican, is prodigious. He may be known by being a little fellow, dressed in a long swing-tailed coat with buttons about the size of a pewter plate ; a pair of breeches, made very loose, for reasons which I shall keep to myself, ornamented with knee-buckles of massy workmanship, and four-square, or near about—I won't be positive. He has a mighty way of pulling up his galligaskins with one hand, and drawing the sleeve of the other across his nose at the same time, I suppose because it tickles him. His stockings were of mixed woollen, and had in them a pair of small jolly, short, long, thick, spindle legs, that precipitated themselves into his shoes by means of two feet at the end of them ; which said feet were rather short, but made up in breadth what they wanted in length. He wears a queue of some two or three dozen hairs, which in their primitive institution seem to have been black, but are now like Hamlet's Senior's beard, ' a sable silver.' As Dennis will doubtless be remembered by posterity, I

thought it well to be particular in giving a description of him, which will become valuable as he shall become extinct.

We inquired of Dennis, if we could get breakfast, being pretty sharp set with a ride of fourteen good honest long miles. 'Breakfast!' said he, with infinite gravity—'you can't get breakfast here, I don't keep tavern any more.' 'However,' said he, after enjoying our perplexity—'I am just going to breakfast myself, and you are welcome to go snacks.' In a little time we had an excellent one; and, when we were going away, Oliver very gravely thanked him for his hospitality, without offering to pay. This made Dennis look rather blue, for he thought it was carrying the joke a little too far. However we paid him at length in silver, at which he expressed no small astonishment, not having seen any in a long time.

We got to the White Sulphur Spring to dinner; and, as drinking the waters was one of the principal objects of my journey, we shall probably spend some days here. Good bye.



## LETTER XVII.



*DEAR FRANK,*

THE other morning after breakfast, Oliver and myself rode to the summit of the Warm Spring mountain, accompanied by Gen. L—— D——, a French emigrant, who left France in consequence of the failure of Napoleon's last effort to regain the throne. The general is about my age, and though covered with wounds, and condemned to death, is active in body and lively in spirits. He entered the army at the age of sixteen, and has ever since been in hard service. "I should like to return to France," said he, one day, "if France remains at peace; but I am tired of war, and never wish to lead armies again, except on parade."

It had rained in the night, and cleared up with a fine westerly breeze, producing that pure transparent atmosphere through which nature appears

to such advantage. The mountain is one of the highest of this region of mountains, and as we sat on a steep rock which lays as it were loose on the summit, we overlooked a sea of hills, extending as far as the eye could reach, and running in a thousand various directions. We fell into conversation about France, that interesting country, whose gay vivacity has often made Europe smile, and whose ferocious enthusiasm has sometimes made it weep tears of blood; that nation of philosophers without study, and sages without reflection. The general, who had been a prisoner in England, spoke of the senseless antipathy of that nation to the people of France, who, until the late revolution, neither felt nor expressed any great dislike to their less liberal and less polished neighbours and rivals. Now, however, the case is altered, he says, and the French nation, ever since the occupancy of France by British troops, who no doubt conduct themselves with their usual modesty and moderation, pant for revenge of national degradation and wounded pride.

At the time when you and I received our first impressions of the nations of this world—and in truth it is not much different at present—all the

books that usually fell into the hands of young or old, were of genuine English production. In histories we learned that the French never failed to violate their national faith, while the English as uniformly preserved it; that they were always beaten by the English by sea and land; or if they happened to gain a rare and solitary victory, it was always by dint of vast superiority of numbers. In plays, and poems, and romances, the Frenchman was almost always a swindler, a coward, a braggadocio, or a frog-eater, caricatured in the most ridiculous colours and dimensions. In short, the men of France were represented to be without principle, and the women without virtue; and if, on any occasion, some vice of John Bull, too glaring to be concealed, was reluctantly confessed, it was always traced to an intercourse with France.

Whatever may have been the effect of these early readings on the minds of others, on mine they produced one directly at variance with that to which they usually give birth. I began at last to feel sorry for the poor Frenchmen, finding they were living on frogs and soup meager, and always got beat so terribly by valiant beef-eating

**John Bull.** I remember my brother-in-law used to amuse himself, and put me in a rage, by enumerating the many battles England had gained against France. For the purpose of defending the reputation of my Frenchmen, I sought for other histories, exhibiting the opposite side of the question, where I found the same circumstances related in a very different manner. The consequence was, that I began to think the people of France were quite as brave, and moral, and certainly almost as polite as those of England. As reflection matured, I traced the causes of these misrepresentations to the early fears and antipathies of England, which had no other way of preserving her independence against the superior power of France, previous to the attainment of her naval superiority, except by implanting in her people a deadly, irreconcilable, contemptuous antipathy. Another consequence of the early discoveries I made, respecting the contradictions in historical records, was, that I lost all faith in history, and took to reading romances, as more amusing, and at least as true.

My good opinion of French people has not been weakened by experience. The bloody

scenes of St. Domingo and of France, have, within the last few years, brought crowds of Frenchmen to this land of the exile, and they are to be met with in every part of the United States. Wherever they are, I have found them accommodating themselves with a happy versatility, to the new and painful vicissitudes they had to encounter; remembering and loving the land of their birth, but at the same time doing justice to the land which gave them refuge. They are never heard uttering degrading comparisons between their country and ours; nor signalizing their patriotism, either by sneering at the land they have honoured with their residence, or outdoing a native-born demagogue in clamorous declamation, at the poll of an election. Poor as many of them are, in consequence of the revolutions of property in their native country, they never become beggars. Those who have no money turn the accomplishments of gentlemen into the means of obtaining bread, and become the instruments of lasting benefit to our people. Others who have saved something from the wreck, either establish useful manufactures, or retire into the villages, where they embellish society, and pass quietly on to the grave.

In their amusements, or in their hours of relaxation, we never find them outraging the decencies of society by exhibitions of beastly drunkenness, or breaking its peace by ferocious and bloody brawls at taverns or in the streets. Their leisure hours are past in a public garden or walk, where you will see them discussing matters with a vehemence which, in some people, would be the forerunner of blows, but which is only an ebullition of a national vivacity, which misfortune cannot repress, nor exile destroy. Or, if you find them not here, they are at some little evening assembly, to which they know how to communicate a gayety and interest peculiar to French people. Whatever may be their poverty at home, they never exhibit it abroad in rags and dirtiness, but keep their wants to themselves, and give their spirits to others; thus making others happy, when they have ceased to be so themselves.

This subject recalls to my mind the poor *Chevalier*, as we used to call him, who, of all the men I ever saw, bore adversity the best. It is now fifteen years since I missed him at his accustomed walks—where, followed by his little dog, and dressed in his long blue surtout, oldfashioned

cocked hat, long queue, and gold-headed cane, with the ribbon of some order at his button-hole, he carried his basket of cakes about every day, except Sunday, rain or shine. He never asked any body to buy his cakes, nor did he look as if he wished to ask. I never, though I used often to watch him, either saw him smile, or heard him speak to a living soul; but year after year did he walk or sit in the same place, with the same coat, hat, cane, queue, and ribbon, and little dog. One day he disappeared; but whether he died, or got permission to go home to France, nobody knew, and nobody inquired; for, except the little dog, he seemed to have no friend in the wide world.

There was another I will recall to your mind, in this review of our old acquaintance. The queer little man we used to call the little duke, who first attracted our notice, I remember, by making his appearance in our great public walk, dressed in a full suit of white dimity, with a white hat, a little white dog, and a little switch in his hand. Here, of a sunny day, the little duke would ramble about with the lofty air of a man of clear estate, or lean against a tree, and scrutinize the ladies as they passed, with the recognizance

of a thorough-bred connoisseur. Sometimes he would go to the circus—that is to say, you would see him laying most luxuriously over a fence just opposite, where, as the windows were open in the summer, he could hear the music, and see the shadow of the horses on the opposite wall, without its costing him a farthing.

In this way he lived, until the Corporation pulled down a small wooden building in the yard of what was then the government-house, when the duke and his dog scampered out of it like two rats. He had lived here upon a little bed of radishes; but now he and his dog were obliged to dissolve partnership, for his master could no longer support him. The dog I never saw again; but the poor duke gradually descended into the vale of poverty. His white dimity could not last for ever, and he gradually went to seed, and withered like a stately onion. In fine he was obliged to work, and that ruined him—for nature had made him a gentleman.—And a gentleman is the *caput mortuum* of human nature, out of which you can make nothing under heaven—but a gentleman. He first carried wild game about to sell; but this business not answering, he bought himself

a buck and saw, and became a redoubtable sawyer. But he could not get over his old propensity—and whenever a lady passed where he was at work, the little man was always observed to stop his saw, lean his knee on the stick of wood, and gaze at her till she was quite out of sight. Thus, like Antony, he sacrificed the world for a woman—for he soon lost all employment—he was always so long about his work. The last time I saw him he was equipped in the genuine livery of poverty, leaning against a tree on the Battery, and admiring the ladies.

The last of the trio of Frenchmen, which erst attracted our boyish notice, was an old man, who had once been a naval officer, and had a claim of some kind or other, with which he went to Washington every session, and took the field against Amy Dardin's horse. Congress had granted him somewhere about five thousand, which he used to affirm was recognizing the justice of the whole claim. The money produced him an interest of three hundred and fifty dollars a year, which he divided into three parts. One-third for his board, clothing, &c.; one for his pleasures, and one for the expenses of his journey to the seat of govern-

ment. He travelled in the most economical style—eating bread and cheese by the way ; and once was near running a fellow-passenger through the body, for asking him to eat dinner with him, and it should cost him nothing. He always dressed neatly—and sometimes of a remarkably fine day would equip himself in uniform, gird on his trusty and rusty sword, and wait upon his excellency the governor. There was an eccentric sort of chivalry about him, for he used to insult every member of Congress who voted against his claim ; never put up with a slight of any kind from any body, and never was known to do a mean action, or to run in debt. There was a deal of dignity too in his appearance and deportment, though of the same eccentric cast, so that whenever he walked the streets he attracted a kind of notice not quite amounting to admiration, and not altogether free from merriment. Peace to his claim and his ashes ; for he and Amy Dardin's horse alike have run their race, and their claims have survived them.

Now that we are on the subject, let me ask you if you ever saw Gen. Pillet's account of his residence in England, where he was a prisoner ?

The general appears to be a great wag—and with a justifiable retaliation has completely turned the tables upon the English, by a sort of wholesale satire upon the whole nation. It is written in the very spirit of the English writings and reviews of French morals and manners, and is justifiable only on the score of retaliation. He says the prisoners in England have such short allowance from the government that they devour horses alive ; that the ladies of rank uniformly retire to a private room after dinner, and get tipsy, and are so awkward that they all seem born with two left hands ! Poor Squire Bull I perceive is in a great passion, at being thus paid in his own coin ; the Courier thinks it exceedingly ungrateful in the French, who are indebted to England for the recovery of their liberty, to buy such scandalous abuse ; and even the Quarterly Review, the common libeller of the human race, has the unblushing effrontery to dare to complain of this righteous retaliation. Nay, Frank, what is worthy of special note, several of our Reviewers and celebrated scholars have discovered a feeling of most edifying indignation at Gen. Pillet's abuse

of England, such as they never exhibited when their own country was infamously calumniated. Good bye.

P. S. I have not time to tell you how we got down from the mountain.

## LETTER XVIII.

DEAR FRANK,

[N my last,\* I unmuzzled my wisdom upon you in a speculation, which, if you have read with proper attention, you are at least as wise as you were before. This is more than can be said of every novelty; for there are many new discoveries that only increase men's ignorance, by overturning an old established and respectable opinion, and substituting doubts in its place. For my part, what with chymistry, geology, and some other improving sciences, I am set fairly afloat, and begin to doubt, as Touchstone says, 'whether pœ is he;'—whether fire, water, earth, and air, the good old constituent elements, are elements or not, and finally whether this earth was ever made at all. Poor Oliver is in a fair way of be-

\* Omitted.—Ed.

coming an orthodox philosopher, at the expense of all other orthodoxy, I'm afraid. He may fairly be said to have a dropsy of the brain, for his head is as full of the Neptunian system, and every round pebble he sees furnishes new proofs of his theory; notwithstanding I tell him, there is no reason in the world, why nature might not make a round pebble as well as a square or three cornered one. The earth and all the planets are spherical, and a round stone is no such mighty matter that people should make such a rout about it. 'In Pythagoras's time, when I was an Irish rat' (which I can hardly remember) they talked about these things just as much as they do now; every philosopher had his theory, and some of these fully equalled the present ones in absurdity—which is saying a great deal for them. The most notable of all was that of Anaxagoras, who held among other things, that the first animals were generated by heat and moisture, (which, by the by, have never been able to do these things since;) that air was the cause of the volition of stars; that the earth was a plane; that the sky was composed of stones, which explains the phenomenon of meteoric stones completely; that the

sun was nothing but a red-hot iron as large as Peloponessus; and that the moon was only a great *Welsh* cheese, about the size of a cart-wheel.

But it is time to return to Virginia, of which I am become almost as much enamoured as Paul was of the lady of that name, in St. Pierre's pretty romance. I am now just on the western declivity of the Allegany ridge; the little brook that runs close by the Sulphur Spring joins Greenbriar river, which joins the Kenawa, which joins the Ohio, which flows into the Mississippi, the great artery of the immense region which extends from nobody knows whence, to the Lord knows where. Our pioneers will soon find out though, if they keep on as they have done lately. I conversed the other day with a most intelligent gentleman, a member of the national legislature, who, the winter before last, was in Paris, and who is now just returned from a journey up the Red river, of some two thousand miles of forest principally. The wandering Arabs were nothing to us, Frank.

The Sulphur spring, where I am now, is much resorted to by persons who have a *touch of the liver*, as it is called, or who are afflicted with

bilious complaints of any kind. It is situated in a pretty little glen, surrounded by hills on all sides; the air is too often loaded with fogs to be altogether to my liking, and the evenings and the mornings, even in the dog-days, are cool and refreshing. The visitors live in cabins built of square logs, whitewashed, and disposed in a range just on the skirts of a little lawn, so that they have all the air of a rural village. Whatever may be the virtues of the waters, he who wants to get a good appetite and allay it too, will do well to come here, to eat mutton and venison. You gentry who get a saddle of mutton a month old, and then hang it up till its juice exhales, and it becomes 'as dry as the remainder biscuit after a long voyage,' don't know what venison is, when brought down from the mountains fresh. I am no great epicure, you know—that is, I neither like terrapins, tripe, beavers' tails, hog-fish, nor any other of the great dishes—but I confess to the Virginia venison.

There is plenty to eat here; but they give you very little time to eat it in. Just fifteen minutes, and the table begins to be cleared. For my part, I like to masticate before I swallow my victuals: so

that, before I had half finished, some confounded Dr. Pedro Positive de Bodeill of a fellow, would whip off the dishes one by one, and leave the dinner entirely extinct. It may be urged in extenuation of this haste, that people who drink plentifully of this water cease to be free agents, and must make the most of their time in eating. The visitors here are mostly invalids, either real or imaginary; if there be any such thing as imaginary sickness. It has always struck me as a great piece of assurance in one man to tell another that he was *hipped*, as the phrase is—as if a man was not a better judge of his own feelings than any body else can possibly be. For my part, I believe by far the most common imaginary complaint is that of fancying ourselves wiser than other people; and, under the influence of this species of the hypochondria, pretending to decide on their internal ailments. I believe a person may suffer much, and yet the hours of health and sickness be so equally balanced, that, to the eye of an observer, nothing seems to be the matter; and thus the poor soul is deprived of sympathy, because he don't waste away and die.

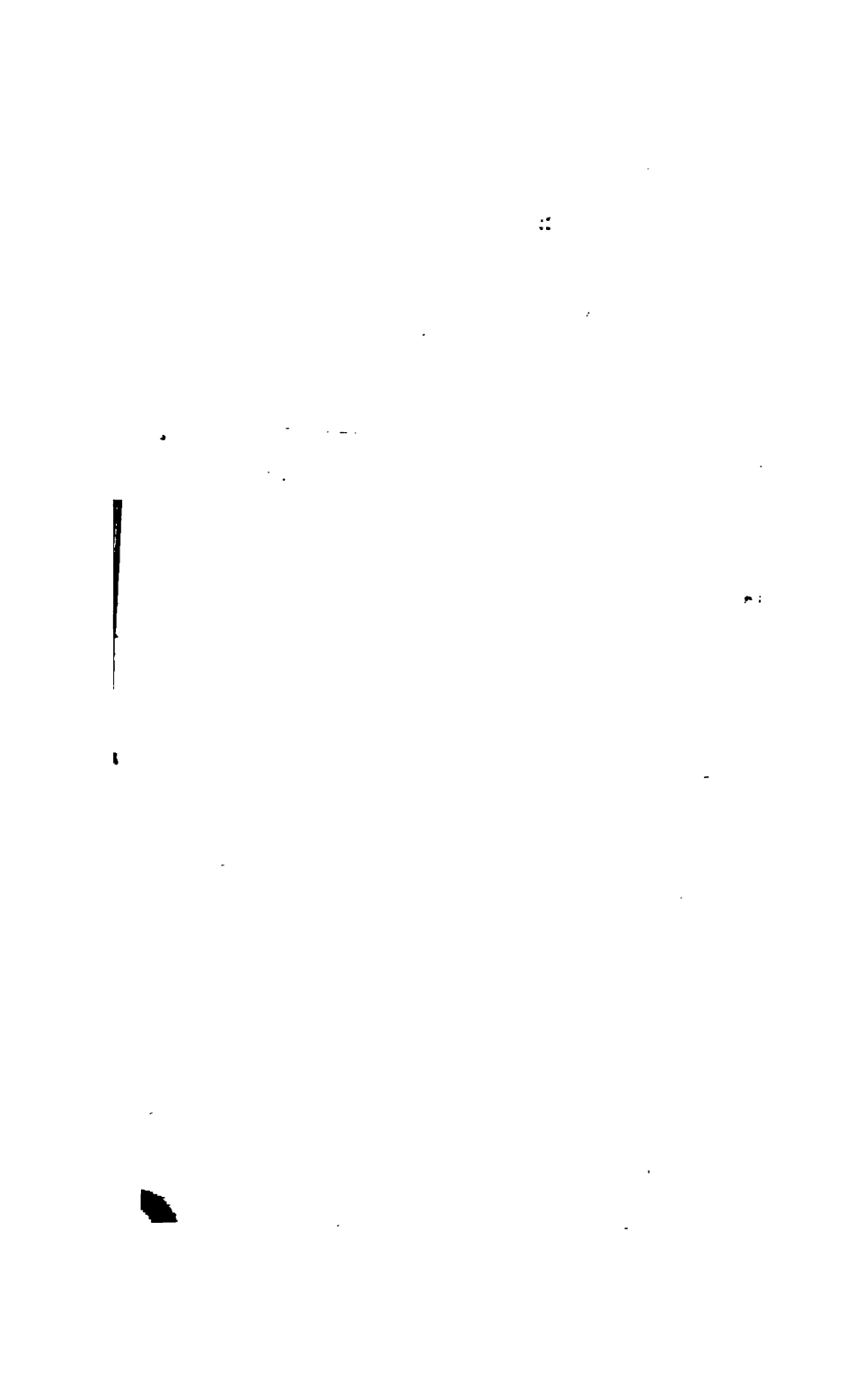
The country people often stop here to take a glass of the water, and I had opportunities of seeing numbers of them. They are much like the country people in all the remote parts of the United States, and appear at the spring, among the fashionable ladies and gentlemen, without the least embarrassment. There is a striking air of conscious independence about them, which, to me, is the finest characteristic of our countrymen, and gives assurance of long-continued freedom. At first, it seems a little unpleasant, but reflection soon reconciles us to this proud badge of liberty. This feature of character is, perhaps, stronger in the south than elsewhere; for where there are a great many blacks, it is, in itself, no small distinction to be white. In Virginia, too, the freeholders give their votes *viva voce*, in the presence of the candidates; and this, doubtless, gives them a character of more sturdy independence.

Here, too, the hunters are seen coming down with their deer to sell; for the mountains in this region abound—with mighty hunters before the Lord—who cultivate a little land, and hunt a great deal. These are the people to make

soldiers of; for they endure more hardships, and encounter more fatigues to kill one deer, than would kill twenty of the stoutest *bucks* in all Christendom. In the morning, they are at their posts in the pathless mountains, in the depths of winter; often all night out; and often bewildered in these recesses for two or three days. They are patient of cold and hunger—but don't bear thirst well, and always carry a bottle of whiskey. It is an utter disgrace to one of these mountain spirits, to draw the blood of a squirrel in killing it; they just hit the bark to which he clings, and bring him down by the shock, stone dead, without touching the body, or breaking the skin. An army of these fellows would march to the north pole, and shoot out the wind's eye, if it were no bigger than the point of a needle. I noticed one of these men last Sunday, down at the spring; and such a lad you won't always see. He was at least six feet high; all bone and sinew, and had but one eye, which by the way was not in the middle of his forehead, else he might have passed for Polyphemus, in a hunting shirt. Whether his having but one eye was the consequence of an amusement said to have been fashionable here—

about, some years ago, or whether it was put out designedly, that he might take sight, without the trouble of shutting it, I am unable to tell; for I reckon the man that asked him might chance to get knocked down, with something betwixt a fist and a sledge-hammer. He was followed by two dogs, lank and fierce, looking somewhat like their master—who, however, talked with a degree of manliness, intelligence, and decorum, that would have astonished people, who measure the fineness of a man's intellect by the texture of his coat. The fact is, that these people are not altogether dependent on hunting, but cultivate little farms—and there is, in the peaceful labours of agriculture, something that softens and harmonizes the heart of man, just as its influence ameliorates the climate, and smooths the rugged face of nature. This hunter told me he had a little farm, in a glen in the mountains, of which he was to have the produce of all he cleared to himself for three years—after which one-third was to be given to the proprietor. I believe these are the usual terms on which land is taken up in this region—where it is less valuable, because situated just between the navigable rivers that centre in the At-

lantic, on one hand, the Mississippi on the other, and a number of miles distant from each. The roads, too, are inconvenient for wagons; and the produce of these little farms finds its principal market at the springs—which are an immense advantage to this country, not only by helping the people off with their surplus produce, but by their visiters affording such excellent examples of refined manners, and models for caps and Cossack breeches. Good night.



## LETTER XIX.

*DEAR FRANK,*

**I**T is a rainy morning; the mountains have all got on their night-caps of mist, and the clouds have fallen far below their lofty summits. Deserted is the green lawn, before the whitewashed cabins of the Sulphur spring, and not a soul is to be seen seated under the shade of the oaks, with book in hand, half buried in sleep and sentimental reveries. What renders this confinement more irksome, I have just finished my last novel, and have nothing left but one of those little works, something between a novel and a sermon, in which religion and love are strangely jumbled together, to the great benefit of the former, no doubt. It is the production of one of the good ladies of Mother England, whose fault it will not be if our young ladies don't admire a spruce

young parson, who proses much, and does nothing beyond any other human being, and pant with unceasing fervour for a husband in a black coat.

In this predicament I shall follow the orthodox example of our good aunt Kate, who, whenever it is too stormy to go any where else, takes her work and runs over to spend the day sociably with her opposite neighbour, who wishes her at the bottom of the Red Sea. I mean to saddle myself on you for the storm, and talk away without mercy, until it clears up as bright as the sun. My head is just now full of the future destinies of this noble young country, and I mean to empty it, destinies and all, if the rain only lasts long enough.

Before I visited this portion of the United States, I had heard much of the continued migration from the Atlantic coasts to the regions of the west. This, at that time, made little impression on me, for as Captain John Smith, of "renowned memorie," says,

"For yet I know this not affects the mind,

"Which eares doth heare, as that which eyes do finde."

I have now had some opportunity of witnessing the magnitude of this mighty wave which knows

no retrograde motion, but rolls over the land, never to recoil again. I have seen it in the progress of wagon-loads of men, women, and children, passing along the great roads leading to the westward, and in the deserted houses, whose former inmates have sought independence in the fertile regions along the Ohio, the Tennessee, the Mississippi, and Missouri. This progress of the human race from east to west, is one of those circumstances which has already had a great influence on the policy of this country, and in its further progress, by generating new states, and propagating new and growing interests, must, in a country, where the majority always governs, sooner or later produce lasting and important effects upon the Union.

Many of the best writers on the affairs of the United States, among foreign nations, as well as the majority of enlightened foreigners with whom I have conversed, have adduced this rapid extension of the limits of our settlements as one of the principal causes of our future separation into a plurality of empires. The number of states; the distance of the extremities from the centre of power, both resulting from this disposition to

emigrate, will, as they affirm, weaken the confederation—because the one will multiply the chances of division, the other render a separation more easy. The Allegany mountains are the geographical division they point out between two of the great empires thus to be formed, and the country beyond, according to their prophecies, must inevitably fall off, like Taliacotius's nose, from the parent country on the Atlantic.

But foreigners, with few exceptions, however enlightened or profound, in my opinion are not competent judges on this subject. They may, indeed, speculate with some degree of certainty on the principles of the constitution, the influence of the laws, and the relative conflicts of the state and general government; but there are latent and moral causes, that operate unseen and unheard, escaping the attention of a foreigner, and eluding his research, like the peculiar graces of the language to which he can never attain. Before such a man attempts to decide on the probability of our separation, he should know the ties of interest and affinity that pervade every part of this country, and act in noiseless opposition to the little local feelings, which are rather subjects for

good-humoured banter than serious causes of antipathy, and operate like the temporary irritation of a virago, the more noisily for being unaccompanied with blows. He should also direct his attention to that union of intelligence, that parity of education, similarity of language, and general opinion, which subsists in no other country of equal extent, and of which there is no example in the history of Greece or Rome, the two great republican states, as they are called, whose fates are supposed to be applicable to our future destiny.

The common error of these political speculators is, the finding analogies in names, without proceeding to ascertain whether the constituent portions of the thing designated by the same name are not radically different. Thus all European philosophical politicians seem to me to have lost sight of the distinction between a representative republic, such as ours, whose first principles are as well defined as those of any other science, and whose practical operation is pointed out, and circumscribed with all the precision of written laws. The wild democracies of antiquity, sometimes swelling into lawless and unrestrained

licentiousness, and at others submitting to a self-created dictatorship, are not to be compared to our sober, tamed, chastened, and restrained freedom, ever the same, because founded upon laws unchangeable, or changeable by a process so full of salutary delays, so embarrassed by saving debate and useful opposition, that the minds of the people and of their representatives have always time to cool, ere they can possibly decide on any important alteration. In the ancient republics, tumult, rather than debate, decided great questions in the last resort; and such was the defective state of representation, that one-half of the time the decisions of a senate were reversed by a mob. Thus it frequently happened that they had no method of getting rid of an obnoxious ruler or an oppressive law, except by resorting to violence, that is to say, by dissolving the elements of the social compact, in order to give every citizen an opportunity of exercising an influence in the state by his physical force that was denied him in every other way.

Owing to the defective state of the ancient representative system, and to the marked distinction between the higher and lower orders, as well as

between different tribes, there was always existing in them a majority of the people whose pride was wounded by a sense of inferiority, and whose passions were irritated by a restriction in the exercise or enjoyment of certain rights, civil or religious. No matter how insignificant these were, they were still sufficient to create two separate orders in the state—cherishing on the one hand contempt, on the other jealousy ; and thus placed under the operation of one of the most irritable and one of the most arrogant passions of the mind. It was this distinction which produced the uniform opposition between the two orders of patrician and plebeian at Rome—that after vacillating for a time between oppression on one hand, and anarchy on the other, ended at last, step by step, in a confirmed tyranny.

To the absence of a complete and well-defined representative system, after all, however, we may trace those ruinous conflicts of a party, which, having no constitutional mode of decision, generally ended in a resort to bribery or force. The result of the former was universal corruption—that of the latter one of three things. The stronger party oppressed the weaker, and thus

destroyed the equality essential to freedom ; or it so strengthened itself, that it became the tyrant of the whole ; or, in the event of the parties being equally balanced, one or other called in foreign aid, and both became subjugated by the power brought in to reduce one. If the interference of a foreign power did not do this, it vested a foreign influence in the state altogether destructive of its real independence. In this country we have a different way of settling our party disputes, without bloodshed, except occasionally a bloody nose at the election polls ; without causing any breaches of the peace, but such as a peace-officer can easily repress ; and without the aid of any foreign influence, except that of a few adopted citizens in some of the great cities, who cannot destroy the wholesome operation of the true American feeling. Let us then leave the examples of Greece and Rome to the philosophers, who write to show their learning, rather than to decide any great question of practical utility ; with remainder to the little Freshmen to make orations about for Saturdays' exhibitions.

The danger of a separation of the Union, arising from the extension of our settlements and the

multiplication of the States, being an apprehension not growing out of any examples drawn from the history of the ancient republics, merits serious investigation. To my mind, however, these two circumstances present a result altogether different from that anticipated by foreign writers, and a certain class of domestic politicians. It appears to me that the danger of a separation of the States diminishes precisely in a ratio with the increase of their number and the extent of territory they occupy, until it arrives to a magnitude which I shall notice by and by. While the States were few in number, a combination of the majority for any purpose of separation or of resistance to the general will, was comparatively easy, because it is much easier to gain the few than the many. The probability of unanimity is, in general, proportioned to the number to be united, and it is much easier to get three to agree than three times three. It might be no difficult matter to induce two States out of three, to combine for the object of separating from a third; but when there are eighteen or twenty States, the probability of a majority uniting in an object of that nature is incalculably diminished. But even if a majority is

inclined to a separation—and unless a majority be so inclined there is no danger of its succeeding—still the difficulty is increased by the utter improbability, that the majority of States so inclined should lie all adjoining to each other, without which geographical combination there would be no possibility of their forming one body politic. I consider this as a strong circumstance, because it is scarcely probable that a minority of the States will ever draw off from the majority, however they may affect to desire a separation. The disadvantages resulting from such a measure to the weaker party are too obvious to need being stated.

There is but one cause I can conceive adequate to produce a separation of the States, and a disrapture of the constitutional bond of union. It is, that the general government shall so exercise its powers as to trench on the rights of the State governments in a manner that shall be obvious to the people at large, and which they will feel not only as a violation of their charters, but a personal insult and grievance. There is perhaps little danger that such a folly should ever be committed; but should it ever be, it will most assuredly

endanger the integrity of this noble and happy confederation. The impulse from the States in their separate characters ought and must give the tone to the general government—and whenever the latter attempts to stem the sentiment, it must necessarily fall, unless sustained by means immeasurably greater than it can at present command. But the truth is, I think, that the States are more jealous of each other than of the general government, which, being a kind of protector of the rights of the smaller ones, is naturally looked up to by them as their legal guardian. From these plain and simple considerations it appears to result, that the multiplication of States, so far from endangering our system, will render it more compact and indissoluble. The more the merrier then; I hope the old States will bestir themselves, and beget a new one every year, till they have become double the number of the original compact, and then we can have a stripe and a star for each—by counting both sides of the flag.

As to the extension of our territory, that is no ground of apprehension to my mind. One great cause of the downfall of the republics of antiquity, was the influence obtained by ambitious

demagogues; and this was pernicious in proportion to the small sphere in which it was exercised. The influence of supposed intellectual and moral qualities, depends on the opinion of the people with respect to their existing in any distinguished individual. If they consider him as possessing not only the capacity but the inclination to protect their rights, and administer to the glory and happiness of the state, they will trust him. But the moment he unmasks any design against either, if the people are too numerous to be corrupted by his largesses, and too dispersed and distant to have been seduced by the fascination of his manners, or the allurements of his condescension, he loses their affections, forfeits their confidence, and becomes insignificant. A single demagogue may corrupt and enslave a single city; but a widely diffused republic like this, must have many demagogues, who will become rivals instead of coadjutors, and consequently be incapable of any general conspiracy against the rights of the people, or the safety of the state. Small states are liable to be overturned by an influence proportionably weak. The pebbles that collect on the shore, are tossed about by the slightest agitation

of the waters ; but the assemblage of rocks resists the force of the tide, and the rage of the elements.

I will slightly notice some circumstances peculiar to our country, which have a secret influence in keeping this nation united, and which make this country a striking exception to all others. Other great states have been created by the conquest and union of smaller ones, whose language, manners, religion, laws, habits, opinions, and civilization, were all different, and continued so long after their conquest. They remained for ever distinct in appearance and feeling, and never forgot that they belonged to different nations and tribes, animated by hereditary hostility from time immemorial. They had neither moral, political, religious, or intellectual affinities ; and were only kept together in nominal union by a military coercion. They resembled, to use a familiar illustration, a dry hide, of which you can only keep one corner down at a time. When the weight of military power operated in one quarter, and kept it in subjection, it rose in the opposite point ; and when it pressed upon the centre, the extremities were all up in arms. The consequence was, that the larger these ill-sorted empires became, the

weaker they waxed, and the moment of their extreme extension was that of their separation.

But it was our happy destiny to grow up and to increase as one nation, speaking, thinking, reasoning, believing, and feeling, with a degree of similarity scarcely paralleled. Though there are varieties, there is still a great family likeness indicating a near kindred, and the exceptions are so few, as well as so dispersed, as to be incapable of any influence on the general mass. We grew up many States, but only one nation. As we extend with the rapidity of a torrent, we incorporate with no adverse tribes, nor force any nation into an unwilling fraternity with those they hate. It is the same people, carrying with them the soul and the intellect of Americans—bearing the very nation on their shoulders wherever they go. Whether the emigrant travel to the banks of the Ohio, the Missouri, or the Mississippi; whether he comes from the north, or the south, he implants letters and civilization in the wilderness. The nation thus grows all of a piece; and the hardy settler, instead of incorporating with new people, and assuming their habits; or forcing them to incorporate with him; or gradually relapsing from his

accustomed habits, only assumes the hardihood necessary to his new situation. One of his first cares, after having provided for the safety and the immediate wants of his family, is to see to the education of his children, that they may grow up like himself, even in the midst of the woods. Thus it happens, as it happens in no other country, that in the remotest regions, and in the most profound wilderness, the traveller sometimes opens on a little log cabin, in a little clear field, where dwells a family whose education and manners differ nothing from his own, except in their superior intelligence and hospitality. He welcomes them at once as his fellow-creatures, not because they belong to the human species, but because he recognizes in them those moral, intellectual, and sentimental traits, that act, like chymical affinities, every where the same ; and every where unchangeable in their operation, and irresistible in their attractions. He shakes hands with them as his brethren, and lays him down to sleep in the midst of them as among his own blood.

Thus every extension of our settlements to the west, is an extension of civilization,—of consolidated empire, knit to the heart-strings of the

republic; a constituent, inalienable part of its very vitals. It is an extension of the same people, identified in all that gives a moral and physical likeness to one great family. If they differ at all, it is only in such trifles as afford rather subjects of humorous banter than deep-rooted hostility. But they have yet stronger ties than mere political and religious affinities and habits. The emigrant to the west traces his blood to the old States, and remembers, with a sort of filial affection, the land where he sprang from,—the people among whom he first lived, and moved, and had a being. The associations of childhood; the memory of early affections; the ties of kindred, all combine to preserve those gentle bonds, which, go where we will, are never severed. Accordingly, we find them keeping up a close connexion with their kindred; inquiring anxiously concerning their welfare of those who come from the neighbourhood; and not unfrequently visiting them a distance of more than a thousand miles. Far distant as they are, they trace their connexion with the people of the Atlantic by the recollections of home and kindred; and are reminded of their identity with the great body politic, not by taxation or

oppression, but by exercising their great constitutional rights, and partaking in the great communion of national happiness. These feelings and natural ties will subsist while the posterity of the emigrant can trace their relatives, or point to the spot of their fathers; and continue as ties too strong to be broken by a mere trifling opposition of supposed interest, or the operation of distance. Long before they are forgot, new bonds will be formed, equally strong, and far more durable, arising from habitual and increasing intercourse; from a clearer perception of connected interests; from a more intimate knowledge of each other; from the force of habit; from a new communion of increasing national glory; and from the growing influence of certain principles of thinking common to our whole people. They perceive more clearly every day the benefits resulting from the union of the States; and the results of every day's experience are becoming every day more clearly indicative of a long, happy, and illustrious confederation. If the country ever undergoes a separation, it will not be owing, I prophesy, to the emigrants to the west; the seeds will be sown along the sands of the sea-shore.

In addition to these political and moral bonds of union, nature has kindly lent her assistance, in laying the ways of a great and combined people, by connecting the most distant, and apparently most disconnected portions of the territory, by rivers, having a beginning in different climates of the world, but centering in one common focus; and, like the veins of the human body, all uniting in one heart. They guide the people from the most remote regions, and bring their productions to a few great marts, where they are reminded of their affinity, and feel their mutual connexion of interests. As these natural highways become travelled, and when the facilities of social and commercial intercourse shall be increased by opening new roads, all these connexions of blood and of interest will be more deeply felt; and thus time, that weakens and destroys every other bond, will only rivet ours.

Another, and the last objection that has been brought to bear against the continuance of our freedom, union, and happiness, is founded upon that inequality of wealth, which has hitherto been the uniform result of time in every state, and which at length generates two entire and separate

bodies of men, remaining distinct, and in a state either of mutual rivalry, or partial dependence, from generation to generation. Hence arises on one hand, a rabble of beggared, ignorant, and unprincipled people, who sink into an abject dependence on the rich, or finally destroy them; and on the other, an order of men sufficiently rich to maintain and corrupt the rabble, so as to make them instruments in destroying the public freedom. I know that so long as mankind seek in riches the chief means of happiness, that the rich will be envied, and consequently hated, by the poor. But here, in this most happily constituted political scheme; here, where the abolition of the statute of entails, which was invented to preserve idleness and debauchery from their otherwise inevitable destiny—poverty and insignificance—has left property to pursue its natural course, and to become the reward of industry, and talents,—these two distinct and permanent orders will indeed always subsist, but will always be composed of different persons and families. The perpetual changes and divisions of property consequent to the destruction of this principle, which is the very foundation of all systems of tyranny,

will prevent any one family from being enormously rich for more than one generation; and the facility with which industry procures land as well as money, will equally prevent any one family from being wretchedly poor, for a longer period. Neither this wealth nor this poverty is entailed upon them, as in other countries. The wealth of the rich man is divided among his children, and their children; and at the end of that time the portion of each is so small as to render the exertion of industry and talents necessary to their subsistence. I have generally seen the second generation obliged to begin the world again. Thus, those who are the aristocracy of one day, become the democracy of the next; and one half of the time they don't know to which they belong; but change sides before they become hearty in either cause. There never, consequently, can grow up in this country that permanent hostility of ranks, which, descending from generation to generation in the same families, acquires an incorrigible inveteracy, and an additional force, as it is bequeathed from father to son, until at last it comes to an open struggle who shall be master. If the rich succeed, the poor become

the instruments in forging their own chains; and if the poor prevail in the contest, property changes hands,—the rich become victims or exiles, and the state is modified anew, either according to the wildest theories of licentiousness, or some new system of tyranny, which in time produces the same effects over again.

To me, then, my dear Frank, these dismal prophecies of our speedy dissolution betray not the true smack of inspiration. They are the warnings of idle fears, or the ebullition of splenetic enemies, who, not being able to destroy our present happiness, endeavour to poison the enjoyment, by denunciations of future ills. Let the philosophers of Europe, benighted by distance, or misled by inapplicable examples, continue to predict our disunion, and the loss of freedom; I see but one cause to limit our boundless increase and eternal duration. Emigrations may continue, the limits of the confederation extend, and new States be admitted, without danger of separation, until the extremes become so distant from the centre, where the sovereignty resides, that men find it burthensome to go there for the transaction

of that business which can be done nowhere else. When it becomes highly oppressive to oblige men to encounter the delays and expenses of attaining justice in important cases, owing to the immense distance of the seat of justice ; and when the representative of the people must travel half a year to exercise his functions the other half, the practical inconveniences of a too great distance will be felt ;—new tribunals, constituting in effect a new sovereignty, may then be called for, and a new state will arise. It will then be time for the government of the United States to say to the rolling sea of population, “ thus far shalt thou go, and no farther.”

On these grounds do I firmly trust in the long, happy, and glorious existence of this fair fabric of freedom. I do not fear its continuance, while our people continue to be educated as they are, and preserve that intelligence which was the parent of their liberty, and the loss of which will be the forerunner of its funeral. If there be in the nature of man the sources of inevitable corruption and degeneracy ; if this tendency to degenerate is the uniform and eternal characteristic of the pro-

ductions of his virtues and his intellect, as well as of his hands, I have nothing to say. But I do maintain, that there is nothing in our political institutions, our laws, our constitutions, our geographical situation, or the prejudices, passions, and antipathies of the various members of this great confederation, that indicates a less duration, than usually falls to the lot of monarchies. I trust that our republic will continue at least long enough to see the civilized world full of republics—free and happy as herself—to be looked up to as the pure and illustrious fountain of civil and religious liberty pervading all nations ; and revered as the venerable patriarch of the whole beauteous tribe of free and independent nations. Then if, at last, she sinks under the denunciation passed on all the works of man, that none of them, however perfect, should be perpetual, it will be ages after you and I are gone, and so distant as to pass the limits of a distinct anticipation.

Luckily for you, it is just clearing up. The cocks begin to crow in anticipation of a golden sunset ; the birds begin to twitter in the little copse just by my window ; the vapours are gliding

like sheeted ghosts swiftly up the mountain's side;  
and the ladies are venturing down to the spring  
again. I have written myself quite dry, so con-  
clude in *great haste*. Good bye.

## LETTER XX.

DEAR FRANK,

THE latter part of last week we left the Sulphur Springs to visit the *Sweet Springs*, so called, because they are sour. To avoid going round a distance of nearly forty miles, we made a short cut through the mountains by a bridle path, which led through a singularly wild region. It was a deep glen, winding between two of the most rugged mountains I had yet seen. A brook ran through it full of little cataracts, and skirted by mossy rocks, green with everlasting shades and vapours. The mountain laurel, the most beautiful shrub that ever grew, bloomed along the banks of this romantic stream, which seemed to have worried through this stubborn mountain by the labour of ages. Every thing was broken and rugged; and there was a kind of unsorted, disjointed air in the

whole mass, which seemed to indicate that the river-gods and the Oreades had had a *tiff* in these parts at some distant period of time.

However this may be, after winding eight or nine miles through this topsy-turvy glen, without any accident, except Oliver's horse being stung by a *yellow-jacket* hornet, which made him kick up as if ten spurs were in his ribs, Oliver keeping his saddle manfully, and for once demonstrating himself a mighty Cavallero. After winding, I say—in spite of Doctor Blair—through this glen, we came out suddenly upon a little pastoral vale, presenting a pleasant contrast to the scene we had just quitted. As usual, a river ran through it, sometimes by the side of the road, then crossing it, and disappearing for awhile, and anon coming back upon us again where we least expected it. This place would certainly produce a poet before long, were it not that the little children go without hats or bonnets, and consequently must have their brains dried up, or fried out, long before they know the value of them. Indeed I know of no more infallible method of making a thick skull than going without a covering for the head. As long, therefore, as this custom shall last, I see no

hope of any poet rising up in this valley, which is a great pity—for then he might immortalize its beauties; or, for aught I know, seriously illustrate the divine power of music, by the blowing down of the walls of Jericho by rams' horns, as a great poet of our day has done.

The Sweet Springs are in the county of Monroe, so called after the distinguished statesman of that name, who was formerly governor of Virginia. It is the custom in this State to name a county after each governor—and they have shown their estimation of the celebrated Patrick Henry, by calling two counties after him, Patrick, and Henry. But among the high republican names of Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and Henry, we are amused to find Prince George and Prince Frederick, and innumerable other names, that set forth the loyalty of the early settlers of Virginia; who seem to have been bent upon demonstrating their devotion to monarchy by irreparably connecting it with the soil itself. The sturdy Puritans of New England, who came over here republicans in fact, never indulged this propensity; and so far as I know, all the names there were given in reference to the birthplaces of their leaders,

or from some connexion that led to the christening.

The spring rises in a long narrow valley, skirted by two high hills, as valleys usually are. It is frequented by people from all parts of Virginia, and many of the more southern States. It is said to be salutary in consumptive cases, or debility occasioned by any cause. Young married people also come here—for reasons which I am at a loss to conjecture; as I never heard that our rivers or springs were infested with any of those pestilent poystering gods that played such tricks with bathing damsels in days of yore. I heard, however, of more than one young lady here who was afraid to bathe in the Sweet Spring fountain—lest something might happen to her.

Among the curiosities of this place, I saw an old man of near eighty, who travelled four or five hundred miles every summer, to keep the dying taper just alive. People wondered, most wisely, as they thought, at this old man taking so much trouble about nothing. But in honest truth, notwithstanding all that is muttered by querulous mortals, there is something in "this pleasing anxious being," that, like a wayward old friend,

we cherish dearly, notwithstanding he grows worse and worse every day. For my own part, instead of turning up my nose, or shrugging my shoulders, at such tenacity of existence, I love to see it; for though not very likely, yet 'tis possible I may grow old myself before I die; and it is consoling to see living proofs, that there are pleasures worth living for, even in old age. Though neither rich, nor married, the world is good enough for me; and while the sun shines gloriously—the moon and stars greet me in my evening walks—while the leaves grow green on the trees—the flowers bloom in the fields—the brooks gurgle—the birds sing, and one living soul cares a rush for me—I am willing to shake hands with it wherever we meet.

As I am about leaving all the springs, hot and cold, bitter and sweet, I will say a few words to you about the modes of living at all that I have as yet visited. It is to be premised, that very few people visit these springs, remote and difficult of access as they are, except to avoid the autumnal season, which is unhealthy in the lowlands; or in the hope of arresting the progress of some dangerous malady. Few come there for

pleasure—and still fewer to exhibit their fine clothes. Indeed the greater proportion of the company consists of invalids ; and, of course, little amusement or gayety is to be found at these places. Bathing, drinking the waters, eating, and sleeping, are the principal occupations ; and for recreation, they sometimes dance of evenings—when there is any music.

It is well they have this amusement, else they would be sadly put to it ; for there is at none of these springs a *drawing-room*, where such of the company as choose may meet for social purposes, either at morning or evening. The ladies live in cabins, most of them containing but one room—which, of course, has a bed in it—and we Americans are not yet in that pure state of Parisian innocence that we can visit a lady in her bedroom, without considerable—trepidation. Thus the only social place of meeting is at the spring ; and there few opportunities for conversation occur. A neat, capacious, and well-furnished drawing-room would add infinitely to the pleasures of these fashionable resorts.

It so happened, that a servant of one of the gentlemen here was an adept in playing Virginia

reels, which are true native-born dances ; and, in my mind, infinitely preferable to cotillions and waltzes—the first of which are only calculated for a people that are born dancing, and the latter for people who are reconciled to indecency, by seeing it practised from their birth. It is not to be wondered at, that custom should render such insensible to the public exhibition of ladies whirling round a room in the arms of gentlemen; but that England and America—the one past her frolicsome days, and the other arrived at years of discretion, should fall into the practice of such preposterous novelties, at war with their ideas of common decorum, is not easily accounted for. But it seems that nations, however vain of themselves, cannot refrain from now and then following the fashions of people they affect to despise. There is almost always one nation which sets the fashion to its neighbours, either in dress, dancing, or some equally important matter. This is not peculiar to the civilized world—for I am told there is a little island among the group of the Marquesas, the inhabitants of which give the *ton* to all the others. The warriors of Madison's island imitated their warlike weapons, and tatooed

themselves after their fashion ; and the fashionable ladies were accustomed to paddle over in their canoes to buy their millinery.

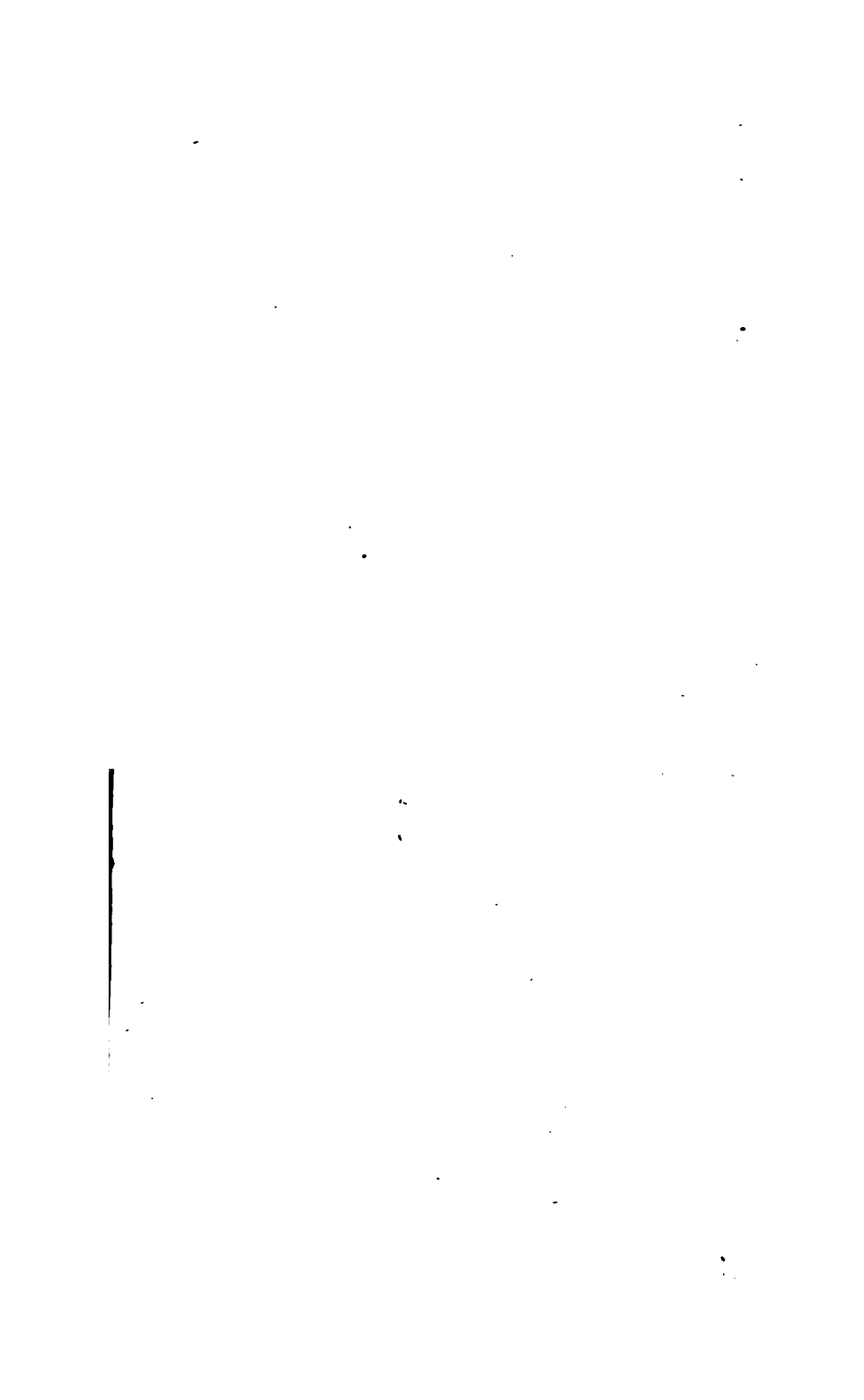
It is only, however, the higher, more refined people, who thus indulge their capricious tastes in adopting foreign novelties. The people at large, who constitute the nation ; who are the true depositories of its manners, habits, strength, and glory, preserve, and are fond of those original peculiarities, which give a national physiognomy, distinct in various features from that of every other. They are attached to the modes of their youth ; and so far from considering it a proof of either sense or refinement, to adopt others, look upon the man who does it, as having vitiated his taste ; or, what is more probable, that he affects what he cannot feel. It has been observed, that the most imitative animal in nature is a dunce ; and heaven help our poor country, at least that part of it along the sea-shore, if the rule applies to a nation, for it imitates every body in turn. Almost every ship that comes into port turns the *bon ton* topsy-turvy, and in one week creates a French revolution among hats, caps, gowns, and petticoats. I remember, on the arrival of the

————— from Bordeaux, the republican ladies, who are mostly under French influence, appeared in hats of such enormous dimensions, that an honest countryman of the west observed, they looked as if they were sitting in the back seat of a great covered wagon. A few of the most sturdy republican young fellows in the mean time wore little short coatees, with broad backs, and buttons at a mighty distance from each other. The federal bucks and belles, however, sided with England. The former, at least those who had travelled, put on corsetts, wore long-skirted, narrow-backed coats, so tight that it was generally supposed they were buttoned by machinery. Then they suffered their hair to grow into a mighty bunch behind, and walked with the genuine *Rutland wriggle*; that is to say, on tiptoe, and with a most portentous extension of the hinder parts. But the ladies who professed fashionable fealty to England, did incontinently disclaim the covered wagons, and yclept themselves in little bonnets, shaped like a clamshell; and because the Prince Regent did affect fat women, contrived their dresses in such a manner, that what with puffings, &c. they looked almost as broad as they

were long. All this was, however, reversed by the next arrival, I suppose; and what succeeded it I am not able to tell.

Now is it not a sin and a shame, that none of our fashionable bucks or belles have genius to invent a new mode of their own, or influence to carry it into general adoption? If the fashionable people had any spirit, they would make their own fashions, rather than borrow them thus servilely from abroad; by which means they are never in the fashion, since, before it can get here, some other has taken its place, where it was originally adopted. If we only had a national costume, national music, national dances, national literature, national feelings, and a few other trifles, what a respectable and glorious nation we would soon become! So long, however, as it is the test of refinement and fashion to imitate the kept mistresses of kings and princes in dress; Bond-street loungers in manners; Italian cartrati in music; and border-ballads in our poetry—so long will we deservedly pass for a contemptible imitative race. All this, I dare say, smacks of Vandalism; and should it ever get to the ears of the English Reviewers, who are lords of opinions in this country,

will very likely get me a sound drubbing. I don't care, not I:—while I live, move, and have a being, I will continue to raise my voice, feeble as it is, against that habit of imitation, that want of manly, national self-confidence and respect, which is the characteristic of those great cities most especially, that give the tone to fashionable manners, modes, and opinions, all along the Atlantic coast. It is this which represses the genius of our country, and palsies exertions that are sure never to be properly estimated; it is this which calls down upon us the contempt of foreigners;—it is this which makes it the criterion of refinement to throw away every feeling of respect and affection for the land of our birth,—and it is this alone that stands in the way of this nation very soon becoming one of the first in the world. Farewell.



## LETTER XXI.

DEAR FRANK,

THE two principal inquiries made by the Sage Pantagruel, the traveller of princes, and the prince of travellers, when he came to a strange place, were as to the quality of the wine, and the state of learning. These he considered as most worthy his attention; and I shall follow his example; first, because he was a mighty king, and legitimate withal—secondly, because he was a giant—and thirdly, because I agree with him in opinion. As to the wine of the south, it is good; and if you don't believe it—*veni; vidi; vici*—which means, come—taste—and try.

Having settled the first Pantagruelian inquiry, we will proceed to the second; and in order to avoid giving offence to the *genus irritabile*, in case this letter ever rises in judgment against me, I will

make my remarks general, and not with any particular reference to the south. I reverence every *star*, and would not offend even little Rhode-Island or Delaware for the world. All men are equal in our country, and why not all States?

Poor John Dennis, the critic, whose example ought to be a warning to all block——, I mean critics, how they meddle with what they have neither intellect to comprehend, nor taste to admire, is made in his madness to pronounce criticism and poetry to be the two noblest species of literature; and in submission to his great authority, I will place them at the head of the list, beginning with the dabblers in the art of criticism first. As I know you are a great admirer of Mrs. Glasse's mode of giving a receipt for every dish, I will give you one for a genuine modern American critic.

Take a young man without a single atom of original genius: inflate him with as much pride, arrogance, impertinence, and self-conceit as he can hold. N. B. The more empty he is at first, the better; for the more of these commodities he will then be able to carry. It is not absolutely necessary that he should be able to read and write, as he can procure an amanuensis; and there is no occasion

to read a book in order to judge of its merits. A critic of the true scent, can tell the merits of a book by the party to which the writer belongs. I would recommend, however, that he be taught to read and write; although there is no necessity that he should be either a man of science or of taste—for the books he reviews will furnish him with science enough for the purpose of talking scientifically, and the reader will give him credit for his taste. When he reviews an author whose ideas are not worth borrowing, he may abuse him if he chooses; but if his ideas are really valuable, he does not understand his trade if he don't run him down till nobody will read his book. He can then steal his ideas without being detected in the plagiarism, and get credit for them himself by putting them in his own words.

To form his style, he ought to read a few pages of the *Edinburgh Review* every day—provided he can read—in order to acquire a sort of flippant, smirking, supercilious air of superiority over original authors, so that in speaking of Shakspeare, or any other poet of good reputation, he may begin something in this way, without blushing at his own impertinence—"We know not, in truth, why we should deal rigidly with the tribe of poets. They

are a harmless race, who devote themselves to the amusement of mankind ; and though by no means to be put on a par with us critics, really deserve to be tolerated." In addition to this, he should study the *Quarterly Review*, in order that he may become familiar with unblushing effrontery, and be able to repeat over and over again falsehoods that have been over and over again refuted.

Thus qualified, he is fully entitled to direct the public taste, circumscribe the licentious pranks of authors, and keep them within bounds ; since the less genius he has the better he can repress that of others. Eunuchs are always selected to guard the chastity of the Harem.

This is the character of the species ; but there are three distinct varieties among our critics, all resembling each other, like monkeys, apes, and baboons, but all a little different. The first is that class which believes in the *Edinburgh* ; the second pins its faith in the *Quarterly Review*. The first will pronounce Leigh Hunt a genuine poet ; the other a silly, affected versifier ; the one will call Humboldt a traveller armed at all points ; the other detect him in an ignorance of many sciences ; the one will praise Hobhouse, and the

other admire an abortion of wit levelled at him in the Quarterly, to which all other abortions are as nothing. In short, one must abuse whatever the other praises, even though it should be one of poor Laureat Southey's odes, which, being obliged to write by contract, one might suppose people would pardon him for. But the followers of the Edinburgh and Quarterly are not only obliged to differ in taste, but in politics, religion, and morals; for the morality of the one is very different from that of the other, and depends altogether upon whether the moralist is in or out of the administration. Thus they go on without any opinions of their own forming, and with a servile acquiescence, believe like the devotee on the faith of the priest, alike degrading their judgment and prostituting their understanding.

The third class is smaller, and not half so fashionable, since our opinions, like our clothes, are admired in proportion as they are imitated from abroad. This has an opinion of its own, but the misfortune is, that it is generally wrong; whether it be from a lack of taste, or a superabundance of humanity, which prompts them to bestow the most praise on the worst models. The two

first classes of critics agree in one thing, which I had like to forgot—to wit, in running down and decrying all American literature whatever, this being a proof of the last degree of refinement—just as a coxcomb of a son, after having been abroad, contrives, by sly winks and knowing nods, to let every body know that he sees and laughs at the homely manners and honest worth of his aged parents. There is nothing they hold so cheap as our poetry, nor can they tolerate any poet of the present day, except he be a Scotchman or a lord. But in my opinion, our poets are at least equal to our critics, who either decry the whole of it in a mass, or praise it with no other discrimination, except that of uniformly giving a preference to the worst. While the followers of the Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews unite in discouraging the modesty of genius, by affecting to lament, that the genius of poetry seems to have denounced his malediction on this country; the other is signalizing its patriotism by the most extravagant eulogies on the worst productions of our unlucky muse, whose fate it seems is, to be discouraged in her youthful flight by degrading comparisons, mortifying pity, or senseless praise. However distant the day may

be, I will venture to prophesy, that when at last the genius of this country shall free itself from a degrading imitation of bad models, and produce a classical poem, our critics will be the last to find it out. Its fame will first be heard as it reverberates from the other side of the Atlantic.

Independently of the curse of criticism under which the poets of this country labour, their poetry is vitiated by an imitation of the fashionable models of the present day. These, it is true, are not without their beauties; but their faults are far more numerous, and there is in dulness an aptitude to imitate faults rather than beauties. It is partly owing to this propensity to imitate glaring faults, rather than unobtrusive beauties, and partly to the habit of admiring the one, and overlooking the other, so common in our critics, that the great and diabolical fault of our poetry is, a sort of savage love of incongruous metaphor, and an aspiration after all the gorgeous second-hand finery of second-rate English poets. The savage prefers glass beads and tinfoil to polished steel; and it would seem that our taste is nearly as much in a state of barbarism; for we prefer the tinsel of Scott to the classic gold of the modest, unassuming

Campbell. In the midst of all the fury of declamatory verse, so profuse in our most fashionable poetry, we detect a little freezing thought, that makes one's teeth chatter; and yet the glitter of the phrase makes amends for the poverty of the idea. We are monarchists in poetry, and bow to a pageant, because it appears with outward splendour. A great portion of the domestic poems of the present day seem to have been produced on the summit of *Ætna*, for they are as cold as ice, and yet throw out vast quantities of ashes, cinders, and pumice-stones. Of such ingredients, I fear, the mass of our poetry is composed, and from such causes has it arisen that we are stigmatized with a want of common poetic genius; when in fact we are only misled by a bad poetic taste. As we are, however, so we shall probably continue, until some rare genius shall arise and vindicate the misled genius of his country, by proving that taste, nature, feeling, and inspiration, may not only exist, but be cherished in the western world. It will probably be reserved for this chosen being, whose fate, should he ever exist, will be more enviable than that of *Shakspeare*, to awaken his countrymen to a perception of the modest graces of natu-

ral tenderness, the touching simplicity of genuine feeling, and the unadorned majesty of naked sublimity, bare as the steep rock on which it reposes. These are now unsought, and unappreciated; and if they happen to peep forth in some little effusion of Selleck Osborn, are swallowed up in an Ode to St. Helena, a burlesque of one of David's Psalms, or a story of a Border Raid. Nobody is found to point out these homely unobtrusive graces, which lie unnoticed in the caravan of poems, that teem with thunder, lightning, robbers, pirates, and border thieves; which labour with electricity and wind, and rumble along like a Canastota wagon over the pavement, noisy in proportion as it is empty. These noisy, puffing, floundering poets, remind us of a lubberly goose, essaying with mighty exertions of wing and feet, to rise from a duck-pond, but never getting quite out of the mud. The real tenant of the skies rises, on the contrary, without effort—you never hear the flapping of the eagle's wings.

You, who I know can "suck melancholy out of a song, as a weasel sucks eggs," have often been galled to see such fulsome praises lavished on poems without a single ray of genius, or spark of

feeling, or feature of nature to recommend them. Indeed, our taste is prone to admire fustian and bombast, to the exclusion of all the higher qualities of writing; and he who wishes our country to assume that station in the world of letters, which nature and genius entitle her to claim, should miss no opportunity to warn her against this false taste, which has misled many a luckless genius; and like the dragon in Revelation, drawn a third part of the stars from heaven, and cast them to the earth.

It appears to me that a great portion of our prose writers have also lost sight of nature and simplicity, and deviated into the same faults that characterize so much of our poetry. This unnatural and inflated style of writing abounds, not only in those productions which admit of greater latitude of declamation, but what is quite ridiculous, obtrudes itself in the sober declarations of public bodies; the addresses of plain homespun manufacturing societies; and not unfrequently may be detected in advertisements of farms and runaway negroes. If a ship is launched now-a-days, she must needs "glide majestically to her destined element;"—every thing is swelled to an unnatural expansion on paper. Schools, where A, B, C, is

taught, have become Academies and Seminaries; Academies have become Colleges, and Colleges Universities. We have "Athenian warehouses for domestic manufactures"—Lyceums for vending ice-creams; and ere long will probably boast of an Areopagus of Shoeblocks. "Big men you," as the Indian said to the white man—and we talk "big" on occasions that don't require it, giving an air of unnatural consequence to trifles, and very often rendering the most affecting circumstances, as well as the highest achievements, ludicrous, by attempting to bake better bread than can be made of wheat.

For examples of this style, see the mass of Fourth of July orations, which come forth "his-ing hot," in which the glories of the revolution are obscured by the manner of celebrating them; and the severe solidity of Washington's grandeur coupled with all the vapourings of an unregulated fancy, exhibiting nothing but a misshapen monster, bedecked at random with a thousand fantastic and inappropriate ornaments. It is not a little to the honour of literature, that the four Presidents of the United States, and the fifth about to be elected to that high station, have furnished

some of the best models of style produced in the United States. Indeed, it may be observed in general, that our state-papers and foreign correspondence, from the commencement of the struggle of independence to the present time, have been fully equal to those of any other nation; and that our public negotiators have on all occasions, at home and abroad, supported the honour of the nation, as statesmen and scholars. Their writings afford the best models of writing we have; for they are not only plain, manly, and perspicuous, but are written with a degree of vigorous elegance highly to be admired. Were I to point to the work which, above all others, both for matter and style, I would recommend to your attentive study, it would be the *Federalist*. Its style is entirely free from the besetting sin of our literature, and its principles such as ought to be engrossed on the mind of every citizen who wishes to know the basis on which this great confederation was formed. It is a commentary on our constitution, written and digested by three of its great framers—men who had few equals among their cotemporaries, and will have still fewer among their successors;—men whose intellects

were strengthened and matured by the intense contemplation of a noble subject; and whose views were purified by a disinterested regard for the welfare of the country, of whose lasting prosperity, glory, and happiness they were then laying the foundation. The time is not yet come when this great work shall reap its well-merited fame. Hereafter, when men of the first rank of intellect, and of the deepest research, shall have laboured to explain and enforce the principles of our constitution, without being able to add any new motives, or throw any new lights, it will then be seen and understood what manner of men these were, who at the first plunge went to the bottom, and left no new discoveries for those who succeeded them.

To conclude this long letter, the product of a long storm, which stopped us nearly a day and a half:—I trust I have satisfied you that the want of a greater number of good models in our literature is not owing so much to a want of genius as to a taste radically bad. This taste is the product of criticism, which of late years has almost devoured and superceded every other species of literature. Those who cannot win the mistress woo the maid;

and those who cannot write a book, may compile a very respectable criticism either upon the character of the book or of its author. Thus it came to pass that, once upon a time, Swift derived the word critic from a tribe of exceeding small asses that erst brayed about the foot of Parnassus, and kept themselves alive by nibbling the tender shrubs they could reach—stinting their growth when they could not destroy them. The critics pocketed this insult at that time; but Swift at last died, and a mighty, valiant, blustering, little reviewer has, I am told, lately revenged the whole tribe, by attacking his moral character! This is acting the true critic—who, if he can't put down an author's literary fame, can stab his moral reputation. This attack moreover exhibits wonderful gallantry in the little critic, since it requires no small stretch of courage in a cur to smell even to a dead lion. If Swift were alive, he would make the little fellow immortal, by associating him with some never-dying jest.

In the days of the inimitable trio, Pope, Swift, and Arbuthnot, critics did not, in truth, make such a figure as they do now; and those who continue to be remembered, are indebted for their

survivorship to the witty malice or merited vengeance of these powerful men, whose praise and censure equally conferred immortality. They were laughed at most heartily whenever they stepped out of their sphere, and held as a sort of eunuchs in literature, utterly destitute of any pretensions to assume the rank of men of inventive genius. They were however tolerated in the literary circles, so long as they did not presume too much, either because they were useful in clipping the redundancies of genius, or because they furnished excellent laughing-stocks for the wits of the day. At present, however, they have fairly turned the tables upon them, for the reason that the critics have increased in the same ratio that the wits have diminished. They have got the better of their ancient tyrants, by attacking the weaker while living, and the stronger when dead; and no longer able to wield those irresistible weapons, with which they quelled even the superlative arrogance of fashionable critics.

The great mass of these lordly usurpers of the empire of the sweet muses, are not only barren themselves, but the cause of barrenness in others. They are, also, not only dull themselves, but the

cause of dulness in others—witness this letter, written entirely for their benefit. They never give life or being to any thing; but they can tell how a book might, could, or should have been written, just as an old, conceited, musty, dry-bone, pigtailed bachelor can tell how to manage a wife or bring up children, better than other people, although he has never been able to get either one or the other.

One more remark, and I have finished this immeasurable letter. It appears to me to be ominous of the sickly state of literature, that whatever form a periodical work at first assumes in this country, it is pretty certain to degenerate at last into a review; just as in sickly seasons, when the air is particularly unwholesome, every disease at last takes the character of the prevailing epidemic. Good bye.

END OF VOL. I.



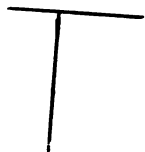






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